Rogelio Tienda

Correctional Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

7/15/2025

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of Sunday, May 28, 2023, at approximately 6:00 a.m., California State Prison Corcoran Correctional Officer Alejandro Vasquez, was driving home after his shift when he was involved in a violent head-on collision. The crash left him unconscious, and his vehicle quickly caught fire. CDCR Correctional Officer Rogelio Tienda arrived at the scene and saw the horrific aftermath of the hit-and-run collision. Officer Vasquez was trapped in the driver's seat, surrounded by smoke and flames. Officer Tienda immediately grabbed a crowbar from his vehicle and worked to smash the window. He pulled Officer Vasquez from the wreckage just moments before flames fully engulfed the vehicle. After moving Officer Vasquez a safe distance, he kept him calm and monitored his extensive injuries. Then, Officer Tienda noticed someone walking away from the scene. Realizing this person might be involved in the collision and attempting to flee, he immediately followed. Without regard for his own safety, Officer Tienda pursued the individual for about a mile before catching up with him. The individual appeared to be intoxicated. Officer Tienda ordered him to return to the scene of the crash, and after several commands, the individual finally complied. The California Highway Patrol arrived shortly afterwards and took the individual into custody. Officer Tienda's quick thinking and fearless actions saved a fellow officer's life and helped ensure a dangerous individual did not escape. His unwavering dedication to his duty, even in the face of personal risk, went far beyond expectations. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Correctional Officer Rogelio Tienda, for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Eraclio Sandoval

Health Facilities Evaluator Nurses

Other

7/15/2025

Special Service Award (Silver)

On February 22, 2023, Health Facilities Evaluator Nurses Eraclio Sandoval and Jappreet Singh began their journey back to the office following the completion of an investigation at a skilled nursing facility in Ridgecrest, California. They faced treacherous weather conditions, with heavy snowfall and powerful winds reducing visibility and road traction. At approximately 3:45 p.m., while traveling on State Route 58 near Tehachapi, they encountered a major traffic accident—three semi-trucks had overturned, completely blocking the roadway. As they approached the accident scene, their vehicle began to hydroplane. Realizing that the cars behind them were not slowing down, they quickly and decisively steered onto the grassy median to avoid a collision and came to a stop. Just moments later, a car careened past them, skidding out of control before crashing into the cement barrier on the bridge. Another vehicle lost traction and slammed into the rear bumper of a car, adding to the growing chaos. Visibility continued to deteriorate rapidly. Suddenly, a semi-truck came barreling toward them, unable to slow down. Acting quickly, they once again steered their vehicle out of harm's way, narrowly avoiding disaster. As they continued navigating through the storm and wreckage, they passed a harrowing scene—two overturned semi-trucks, several damaged signal trucks and other numerous vehicles that had collided. Then, they noticed four men carrying a severely injured boy toward a vehicle ahead of them. Desperate for help, the men pleaded with the driver to stop. Instead, the vehicle sped off, kicking up snow onto the injured boy. Seeing this, Mr. Sandoval and Mrs. Singh immediately called 911, but dispatch could not tell them when help would arrive. The four men ran to Mr. Sandoval and Mrs. Singh, pleading for help and even offering money in desperation. Mr. Sandoval and Mrs. Singh refused the money and quickly assessed the boy's injuries—a deep head wound with blood and clear fluid coming from his left ear; bones protruding out of his left wrist; blue lips, and signs of a collapsed lung from crushed ribs. The boy was unresponsive and in critical condition. Realizing there was no time to wait for an ambulance, they decided to drive him to the hospital themselves. The men who had carried the boy wept with gratitude as they carefully laid him in the back seat of the car. His brother gently cradled his head in his lap, holding him tenderly. On the boy's right wrist was a bracelet—one commonly worn by members of the Sikh community. As the car pulled away, his brother spoke softly in Punjabi, urging him to hold on. Upon arriving at the hospital, the boy was carefully transferred to a gurney and rushed inside for treatment. Later that day, Mr. Sandoval and Mrs. Singh called the hospital to check on the boy's condition. His brother told them he had suffered a brain injury and was being airlifted to a specialized facility. With deep gratitude, he thanked them both for giving his brother the chance to survive. Health Facilities Evaluator Nurses are tasked with ensuring healthcare facilities meet regulatory standards—they are not expected to provide emergency roadside medical aid. On this day, Mr. Sandoval and Mrs. Singh demonstrated exceptional courage and compassion. Braving dangerous storm conditions, they relied on their medical training to assist a critically injured child when emergency services were delayed. Risking their own safety, they transported him to the hospital—actions that proved to be the difference between life and death. In the days that followed, it was confirmed: the young boy survived. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Public Health, Health Facilities Evaluator Nurses Eraclio Sandoval and Jappreet Singh, for their heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Jesse Rogers

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/15/2025

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the night of August 29, 2024, Officer Jesse Rogers was conducting a routine patrol when he received a call from the Redding Communication Center about a crash near State Route 44 and Airport Road. Officer Rogers arrived at the scene around 1:00 a.m., where he saw a woman frantically waving her arms in the middle of the eastbound lane. She told him that she was one of four people involved in a single-vehicle crash and that her mother was still trapped in the right front seat of the vehicle. Officer Rogers located the vehicle on the shoulder of the road. As he approached the vehicle, he saw flames spreading across the car. The male driver was lying on the ground against the vehicle, and another male passenger was seated nearby, unable to move. Officer Rogers immediately turned his attention to the trapped female passenger. The vehicle's damage made it impossible for him to open the door. The woman, conscious but in distress, told him that her legs were trapped, and she could not move. Without hesitation, Officer Rogers grabbed the fire extinguisher from his patrol car and tried to put out the flames, but the fire and smoke quickly worsened. As the flames spread, Officer Rogers accessed the rear hatch of the vehicle to try to free the woman. The heat was so intense that the vehicle's interior began to melt onto the woman's hair and face, as well as Officer Rogers' hands and arms. Despite the escalating danger, Officer Rogers wiped the burning plastic away from her face with his bare hands, as she screamed in fear and pain. The situation became increasingly dangerous as the ground around them also caught fire. Realizing the immediate threat of the spreading fire, Office Rogers made the difficult decision to disengage from the trapped woman and focus on rescuing the other two injured individuals. He dragged both men away from the now fully engulfed vehicle. Officer Rogers tried to update the communication center about the situation but was unable to speak due to the severe heat and smoke inhalation he had suffered. While selflessly risking his life to save others, Officer Rogers endured third-degree burns to his right hand and fingers, heat and smoke inhalation, and a torn meniscus in his left knee. Sadly, the female passenger succumbed to her injuries. However, Officer Rogers's brave actions were instrumental in saving the lives of the other two individuals involved in the crash. His unwavering courage, dedication and tireless commitment to his duty were beyond measure. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol, Officer Jesse Rogers, for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Jeronimo Prado

Caltrans Maintenance Area Superintendent

Department of Transportation

7/15/2025

Special Service Award (Silver)

On Wednesday, March 13, 2024, at about 12:38 p.m., Caltrans Maintenance Area Superintendent, Jerry Prado, was about to enter the eastbound freeway at Grand Avenue in the City of Walnut, California. As he approached the on-ramp, he saw something unusual —a young man standing on the bridge, looking down at the traffic below. The man was climbing on the safety railing, putting himself in extreme danger. At first, Mr. Prado thought the man might be watching an incident on the freeway below, but something felt off. Without pause, Mr. Prado pulled over to check. As Mr. Prado exited his vehicle, he realized the situation was much worse than he had initially thought. The young man was still climbing, edging closer to a tragic fall. Without a second thought, Mr. Prado ran toward him. Acting on instinct, he grabbed the young man and pulled him away from the railing to safety. As he held onto him, Mr. Prado saw that the young man was in deep emotional distress. This was more than just a physical rescue— it was an emotional intervention. Mr. Prado's compassionate embrace helped calm the young man, offering reassurance when he needed it most. Other drivers saw what was happening and stopped to help. Emergency services were called, and within moments, officers from the California Highway Patrol, Los Angeles County Sheriffs, paramedics and ambulances arrived. The young man was taken to receive care, and authorities ensured his wellbeing. What made this moment so remarkable was not just Mr. Prado's quick thinking, but the immense personal risk he took to save a life. He had no way of knowing the young man's mental state or if he was armed. He also faced the real danger of being pulled over the railing himself—falling 30 feet onto live traffic below. Mr. Prado's bravery overrode any fear or hesitation for his personal safety. His selflessness that day made the difference between life and death. Mr. Prado serves as an inspiration of the impact one person can have in a moment of crisis, no matter the risk. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation, Maintenance Area Superintendent Jerry Prado, for his heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Jarett Walter Lopez

Caltrans Landscape Maintenance Worker

Department of Transportation

7/15/2025

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the morning of May 13, 2014, Caltrans Equipment Operator I, Jarett Walter Lopez, and Landscape Maintenance Worker, Vernon Ladd, were on their way to fix an irrigation issue on Highway 41 and North Avenue in Fresno, California, when they came upon a devastating accident. A petroleum fuel truck had collided with a school bus filled with children, severely damaging the school bus. Realizing the danger and severity of the situation, Mr. Lopez and Mr. Ladd immediately pulled over to help. Upon reaching the scene, the bus driver, trapped and distressed, pleaded with Mr. Lopez and Mr. Ladd to rescue the children—students between the ages of 6 to 14—who were still inside the bus. Gas from the ruptured fuel truck was leaking beneath the bus, escalating the dangerous situation. Mr. Lopez and Mr. Ladd moved swiftly and fearlessly. They first tried to enter through the front of the bus, but found it blocked by the wreckage. They immediately ran to the rear of the bus, gained access and began the perilous task of rescuing the children who were trapped inside. With fuel spilling onto the ground beneath them, they stayed focused and determined, saving all 35 students. After getting the children to a safe distance from the wreckage, Mr. Lopez and Mr. Ladd provided first aid to the injured children and comforted them until emergency responders arrived. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to promoted California Department of Transportation, Equipment Operator II Jarett Walter Lopez, and now-retired Caltrans Landscape Maintenance Worker Vernon Ladd, for their heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Vernon Ladd

Caltrans Landscape Maintenance Worker

Department of Transportation

7/15/2025

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the morning of May 13, 2014, Caltrans Landscape Maintenance Worker, Vernon Ladd, and Equipment Operator I, Jarett Walter Lopez, were on their way to fix an irrigation issue on Highway 41 and North Avenue in Fresno, California, when they came upon a devastating accident. A petroleum fuel truck had collided with a school bus filled with children, severely damaging the school bus. Realizing the danger and severity of the situation, Mr. Ladd and Mr. Lopez immediately pulled over to help. Upon reaching the scene, the bus driver, trapped and distressed, pleaded with Mr. Ladd and Mr. Lopez to rescue the children—students between the ages of 6 to 14—who were still inside the bus. Gas from the ruptured fuel truck was leaking beneath the bus, escalating the dangerous situation. Mr. Ladd and Mr. Lopez moved swiftly and fearlessly. They first tried to enter through the front of the bus, but found it blocked by the wreckage. They immediately ran to the rear of the bus, gained access and began the perilous task of rescuing the children who were trapped inside. With fuel spilling onto the ground beneath them, they stayed focused and determined, saving all 35 students. After getting the children to a safe distance from the wreckage, Mr. Ladd and Mr. Lopez provided first aid to the injured children and comforted them until emergency responders arrived. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to now-retired California Department of Transportation, Caltrans Landscape Maintenance Worker Vernon Ladd, and promoted Equipment Operator II Jarett Walter Lopez, for their heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Charles Davis

Correctional Sergeant

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

7/15/2025

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the afternoon of Friday, August 4, 2023, Correctional Sergeant Charles Davis was returning home after working a double shift when he saw a house engulfed in flames. Without hesitation, he pulled over and rushed to the front door, knocking frantically to alert anyone inside. He could hear dogs barking and learned from a neighbor that multiple people lived there. Determined to help, Sergeant Davis bravely entered the burning home to search for occupants. Inside, he faced an unexpected challenge—several dogs, frightened by the fire, bit him multiple times. Despite the pain, Sergeant Davis pressed on. In one bedroom, he found a young man in a deep sleep, completely unaware of the danger. The man had a severe developmental disability and had taken medication that left him unresponsive to the chaos around him. Sergeant Davis quickly woke him and carried him to safety after confirming that no one else was inside. He did not stop there. Sergeant Davis managed to save three dogs from the rapidly spreading fire. The blaze was so intense that multiple emergency crews had to respond to contain it. Thanks to Sergeant Davis's quick actions and selflessness, the young man and the animals he saved survived a fire that could have taken their lives. He put himself in danger without a second thought, risking everything to save strangers. Today, we honor and commend Sergeant Davis for his extraordinary bravery and unwavering commitment to serving others. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Correctional Sergeant Charles Davis, for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Thomas Coyle

Senior Laboratory Assistant

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

7/15/2025

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the afternoon of August 28, 2023, Senior Laboratory Assistant Thomas Coyle was driving home from work when he stopped at a red light on Highway 16 at the corner of Grant Line Road in Sacramento County. He was behind a CHP officer when he witnessed a violent crash involving a garbage truck and several other vehicles. In the collision, a pickup truck went airborne and crashed into the middle of the road, bursting into flames on impact. Two other vehicles rolled off the road and slammed into a power pole, causing it to lean dangerously. The impact brought down power lines, sparking both a vehicle fire and a grass fire. The CHP officer moved to block the intersection, while Mr. Coyle safely pulled off to the side of the highway. Straightaway, he ran toward the wreckage to help. Several drivers had minor injuries, but the situation was far more critical for the drivers of the pickup truck and the garbage truck. The pickup truck driver was severely injured and barely conscious, with the fire closing in fast. Acting swiftly, Mr. Coyle pulled the driver from the burning pickup truck and dragged him to safety. Moments later, loud pops and explosions rang out as the fire had ignited ammunition inside the pickup truck, making the scene even more dangerous. At first, the greatly injured pickup driver was safe while awaiting paramedics, but the fire continued to grow dangerously close. The leaning power pole threatened to fall at any moment. Without hesitation, Mr. Coyle helped the pickup driver to his feet and moved him further away from the growing danger. Then, Mr. Coyle spotted another life in jeopardy—the garbage truck was also engulfed in flames, with the driver still trapped inside. He immediately alerted the CHP officer, and together they rushed to pull the driver from the burning garbage truck and moved him to safety. As fire personnel arrived, they urgently shouted, "Everybody get out of here! That pole is going to come down!" Without a second thought for his own safety, Mr. Coyle ran back again for a third time to help move the injured pickup truck driver to safety behind a local police vehicle. Through his incredible heroism and bravery, Mr. Coyle saved two lives that day. His selflessness and quick thinking in the face of extreme danger are a testament to the courage he displayed when others needed him most. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Senior Laboratory Assistant Thomas Coyle, for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Isai Camino

Caltrans Highway Maintenance Leadworker

Department of Transportation

7/15/2025

Special Service Award (Silver)

On Sunday, January 7, 2024, at around 11:00 a.m., Caltrans Maintenance Leadworker Isai Camino and Highway Maintenance Worker John Bedolla were traveling south on Interstate 15 to perform routine maintenance on the toll lanes. While en route, they noticed an overturned vehicle on the northbound side of the freeway. Without hesitation, they took the next exit and made their way to the scene to investigate. Upon arrival, they were met with the sounds of panic —cries and shouts coming from inside the wreckage. A woman and her young son were trapped inside the overturned vehicle. Mr. Camino and Mr. Bedolla immediately sprang into action. Mr. Bedolla carefully helped the woman escape through the front windshield, ensuring she remained calm and safe throughout the rescue. At the same time, Mr. Camino climbed onto the side of the wreck and quickly worked to pry open the rear door. He gently helped the frightened young boy out of the vehicle, offering words of reassurance as he led him to safety. Emergency responders arrived within minutes, and thankfully, no one sustained serious injuries. Mr. Camino's and Mr. Bedolla's courageous actions to rescue and comfort the mother and child exceeded all expectations. Their selfless bravery in a moment of crisis exemplified true heroism. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation, Caltrans Highway Maintenance Leadworker Isai Camino, and Highway Maintenance Worker John Bedolla, for their heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

John Bedolla

Caltrans Highway Maintenance Worker

Department of Transportation

7/11/2025

Special Service Award (Silver)

On Sunday, January 7, 2024, at around 11:00 a.m., Caltrans Highway Maintenance Worker John Bedolla and Maintenance Leadworker Isai Camino were traveling south on Interstate 15 to perform routine maintenance on the toll lanes. While en route, they noticed an overturned vehicle on the northbound side of the freeway. Without hesitation, they took the next exit and made their way to the scene to investigate. Upon arrival, they were met with the sounds of panic—cries and shouts coming from inside the wreckage. A woman and her young son were trapped inside the overturned vehicle. Mr. Bedolla and Mr. Camino immediately sprang into action. Mr. Bedolla carefully helped the woman escape through the front windshield, ensuring she remained calm and safe throughout the rescue. At the same time, Mr. Camino climbed onto the side of the wreck and quickly worked to pry open the rear door. He gently helped the frightened young boy out of the vehicle, offering words of reassurance as he led him to safety. Emergency responders arrived within minutes, and thankfully, no one sustained serious injuries. Mr. Bedolla's and Mr. Camino's courageous actions to rescue and comfort the mother and child exceeded all expectations. Their selfless bravery in a moment of crisis exemplified true heroism. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation, Caltrans Highway Maintenance Worker John Bedolla, and Highway Maintenance Leadworker Isai Camino, for their heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Ken Aasen

Sr. Biologist Supervisor/Marine Fisheries

Department of Fish and Wildlife

3/9/1995

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 9, 1995, Phil Pridmore, Wildlife Habitat Supervisor II, and Ken Aasen, Sr. Biologist Supervisor/Marine Fisheries, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to their personal safety in the rescue of a woman who was stranded for over four hours in the devastating 1995 floods of the Napa River. She clung to a post in a submerged vineyard after her car sank in the river. The morning of March 9, 1995, the Napa River had flooded its banks, quickly engulfing roads and bridges in the area. Mr. Aasen and Mr. Pridmore started out in their dinghy to back up two Department wardens who were attempting to rescue a woman from a submerged vineyard. They saw the wardens' boat being swept into the vines, where it became immobilized, so they decided to follow the current down to a tree line where they hoped to work their way up to the woman. Their small dinghy was quickly slammed into a tree and sank in less than five seconds. By standing on submerged tree branches they managed to retrieve the boat, dump out the water, removed the motor and fuel tank and try again. Working together, they struggled to reach the woman by pulling the boat along vineyard guide wires. When he could touch ground and keep his head above water, Mr. Pridmore would slip over the side and pull the boat against the current while Ken pulled along the guide wires. When the current became too swift, Mr. Aasen maneuvered the boat across the vines and wires, while Mr. Pridmore continued in the water until he reached an area 50 yards from the woman, where the strong current had pulled out the vines and guide wires. He couldn't swim against the current, so he talked her into letting go of the post and caught her as she floated by. Mr. Aasen managed to maneuver the boat to the same row Mr. Pridmore and the woman were floating down. They got aboard and started across the current to a waiting ambulance, but their oarlock broke and they were swept away by the fast current. The wardens had freed their boat by this time and were able to make their way to their dinghy and tow it back.

Sultan N. Abassy

Transportation Engineering Technician

Department of Transportation

7/20/2023

Special Service Award (Silver)

On July 20, 2023, at 1:40 a.m. Transportation Engineering Technician Sultan Abassy was on his way to a job site for a scheduled concrete pour. Upon entering the southbound Highway 55 East Dyer Road on-ramp in Santa Ana, Mr. Abassy noticed the scene of an accident with a badly damaged motorcycle lying down in the gore area. While observing the sight, he saw a man about 50 feet further south who appeared to be the motorcyclist, dressed in all black, lying motionless across the #4 traffic lane. Mr. Abassy sprang to action, parking the state-issued truck, turning the rotator safety lights on, and immediately calling 911. Being first aid certified and with some medical background, Mr. Abassy detected a faint pulse and checked the unconscious motorcyclist carefully for any major injuries or bleeding without changing his position. He stayed with the motorcyclist and as he regained consciousness, tried to keep him calm while assuring him help was on the way. About 20 minutes later, still waiting for first responders, the motorcyclist began to roll from being face down onto his side. It was then that Mr. Abassy saw the man's face was purple. His helmet strap had tightened under his chin, and he was choking. Mr. Abassy rapidly loosened the strap and the motorcyclist started to breathe, his face color changing back to normal, however he could not talk due to his facial and mouth injuries. While waiting for emergency response to arrive, the 911 dispatcher recommended Mr. Abassy leave the scene as it was unsafe for him to remain there in the lane, but he refused and persisted in providing aid to the motorcyclist. CHP arrived on the scene, closing all southbound lanes, while first responders provided care. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation, Transportation Engineering Technician Sultan Abassy for his heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

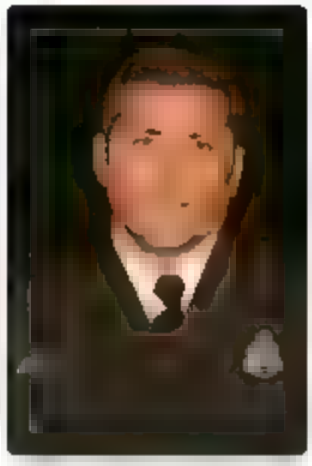
Frank A. Abril

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/19/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)



On September 19 2009 on a very hot and dry Southern California day in Riverside County, a brush fire started near State Route 79 and Sage Road east of Temecula The fire spread rapidly, eventually burning over 340 acres and destroying eight homes. Firefighting conditions were extremely explosive with the temperature near 100°F, winds blowing up to 19 miles per hour and flame lengths ranging from 60 to 90 feet high CAL FIRE Copter 301 was flying a fire mission as an initial attack responding crew. On board was the pilot and CAL FIRE employees Captain Abril and Firefighters Connolly, DeLeon, Medina, Ricketts, and Santone. The crew was assigned to a hot spot in an attempt to contain the rapidly expanding fire.After landing, the crew began hot spotting the fire using hand tools. Shortly thereafter, the crew learned of a woman trapped in her home and surrounded by fire. Captain Abril immediately recognized he was near the location. The crew frantically began looking for and soon found a barefoot 84-year old woman carrying two dogs The woman was standing in front of a residence that was fully involved with fire and frantically told the crew she didn't know where to go or what to do.The crew immediately gave the woman a canteen of water and medically assessed her. Two firefighters entered a nearby residence and retrieved a blanket and pair of shoes for her They shielded the woman with the blanket, assessed the best escape route, and at great personal risk to the woman and themselves, passed through fire and nearly blinding smoke conditions to a safer location. The actions of the crew, without regard for their personal safety, saved the life of the woman.

Christopher Acevedo

Fire Apparatus Engineer Paramedic

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

4/11/2022

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 11:25 p.m. on April 11, 2022, off-duty Fire Apparatus Engineer Paramedic Chris Acevedo was at home with his family getting ready for bed. While upstairs, his daughter looked out the window and could see flames coming out of a large two-story home across the street. She notified her dad, who then ran across the street into the burning home. Mr. Acevedo made entry through the front door and yelled, "Is anyone in here?" Hearing mumbling coming from the second floor, Mr. Acevedo found and climbed the stairs. He quickly located a male victim and dragged him out of the burning home to safety. Mr. Acevedo remembered that a small child and two older adults lived in the home as well. By this time, Mr. Acevedo's wife and father were yelling for him not to go back in, but he was compelled to enter the burning home once more to search for potential victims. He again made his way up the stairs but was pushed back by the smoke and heat. Going back down the stairs, he performed a search of the first floor before exiting, suffering from smoke inhalation. Both Mr. Acevedo and the victim were transported to the local hospital for treatment. It was later determined that thankfully the other residents were not home at the time of the fire. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire Apparatus Engineer Paramedic Chris Acevedo for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

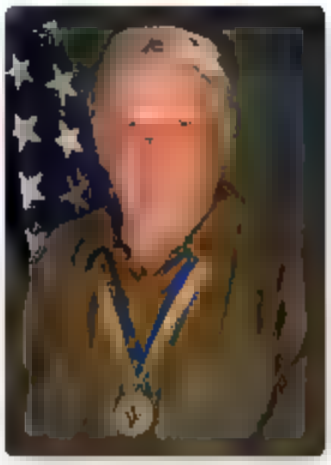
Dave Ackley

Caltrans Equipment Operator

Department of Transportation

2/2/2012

Special Service Award (Silver)



On February 2, 2012, around noon, California Department of Transportation Equipment Operators Dain Hartman and Dave Ackley were working on a rural section of Highway 36 in Humboldt County near the Dinsmore Airport when they noticed a small airplane on the horizon rocking back and forth, heading towards the airport's landing strip. As they watched, the airplane crossed the highway and touched down on the landing strip, bounced, went halfway down the runway, and then bounced again. The plane then started to climb, but suddenly nose-dived past the end of the runway and crashed on a grassy patch near the highway. Mr. Ackley and Mr. Hartman tried to radio for emergency services, but there was no signal. They quickly hopped over the airport fence and found a student pilot who had been thrown from the plane seconds before the crash. The flight instructor was still in the cockpit, badly injured. The student pilot called 911 from his cell phone, but was in such a state of shock that he handed his cellphone to Mr. Ackley. Suddenly, the front of the airplane was on fire. The student pilot and Mr. Ackley pulled the wounded flight instructor from the cockpit while Mr. Hartman sprayed the airplane with a fire extinguisher. The flames grew higher and when they reached the wings where the fuel is stored, the airplane exploded, sending a giant fireball into the sky, higher than nearby power lines. The wind blew the flames and the men moved the wounded flight instructor farther away as the surrounding grass began to catch on fire. Luckily, help soon arrived to administer first aid and extinguish the grass fire. With no regard for their own safety, Equipment Operators Dain Hartman and Dave Ackley's heroic service saved the lives of a student pilot and a flight instructor when their airplane crashed.

Aaron Roth Adair

Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/20/2022

Special Act Award (Gold)

On February 20, 2022, at 12:48 a.m., Officers Aaron Adair and Steven Strobel arrived on scene of a traffic crash where they discovered a vehicle with its engine compartment on fire with flames rapidly spreading. The male driver was unconscious and trapped inside. Officer Adair entered the passenger compartment and cut the airbags and driver's seatbelt. He then grabbed the right side of the driver from the waist, but the driver's feet were caught on the seatbelt. Officer Strobel and an off-duty deputy then assisted Officer Adair in completely removing the driver from the vehicle only seconds before the flames reached the passenger compartment. The Officers carried the unresponsive driver approximately 100 feet away as explosions were heard coming from the vehicle. Officer Strobel and the off-duty deputy then administered CPR until the West Covina Fire Department arrived who then continued CPR and other life saving measures on the driver. Sadly, the driver succumbed to his injuries at the scene. Due to the vehicle becoming fully engulfed in flames during the rescue, Officer Adair suffered severe burns to his left hand and was transported to the hospital by his partner, Officer Strobel. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Aaron Roth Adair for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Paul Adams

Officer

California Highway Patrol

11/9/1960

Special Act Award (Gold)

Officer Paul M Adams was on his beat in Norwa k when a citizen hailed him and told him a man was shooting people on the street. Officer Adams radioed for assistance and proceeded to the scene. When he arrived on the scene, he found one of the victims and crowd of on ookers. As he approached, someone shouted, "Here he comes now" and Officer Adams saw a man running towards him with a rifle. Officer Adams drew his service revolver and commanded the man to "Hold it!" The man took aim at Officer Adams with his rifle The officer fired one shot from approximately 77 feet away and the bullet struck the subject between the eyes. Subsequent investigation revealed that the gunman had wounded three people in his rampage When examined, the following weapons were found on the body: one rifle, one 38 special revolver, three knives and a plentiful supply of ammunition

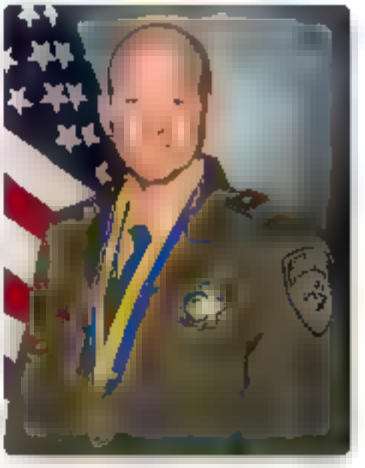
Phillip Agdeppa

Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/8/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)



On October 8, 2017, at 9:52 p.m., California Highway Patrol Officers Pete Gavitte and Whitney Lowe responded to a rapidly growing fire in the Atlas Peak area of Napa County. Approximately 20 minutes later, their helicopter arrived on scene and observed the

smoke-filled air, fallen trees and downed powerlines across multiple roadways. Trapped residents had little time before the approaching fire would overcome them. Officer Gavitte and Officer Lowe recognized the only escape for these residents would be by helicopter rescue. Despite the firestorm's wind gusts in excess of 70 miles per hour, and extreme downdrafts and updrafts, they made the decision to fly their helicopter into the heavy smoke and land near the vehicles attempting to exit the area. Officer Gavitte stated that, "the intense windy conditions felt like a hurricane," but he was able to maintain control of the helicopter. Realizing the need for additional resources, Officers Gavitte and Lowe requested assistance from California Highway Patrol Northern Division helicopter, crewed by Officer Chad Milward and Officer Phillip Agdeppa. Upon arriving at the scene, Officer Agdeppa exited the helicopter and was quickly informed of a trapped woman who was more than eight months pregnant. The pregnant woman and three others were quickly loaded onto the helicopter and flown to safety at a local hospital. The officers faced grueling and physically demanding conditions for more than six continuous hours in complete darkness as they conducted multiple dangerous flights behind the fire line while smoke, ash, and embers blew around them. Aerial surveillance after the night of the rescues showed the area where the rescue operations were conducted had been completely overrun by the fire. The Atlas Fire burned more than 50,000 acres and destroyed over 400 structures. With no regard to his own safety, Officer Agdeppa went above and beyond the call of duty, saving 15 lives. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Phillip Agdeppa

Matthew E. Aguilar

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/1/1994

Special Service Award (Silver)

On July 1, 1994, at approximately 6:20 pm, Officer Matthew E. Aguilar was completing a traffic stop when he was alerted by another motorist of a possible intoxicated driver passing his location. Officer Aguilar quickly responded and overtook the suspected intoxicated motorist. Before an enforcement stop could be initiated, the errant driver drifted off the right side of the roadway and travelled down a very steep eighty-foot embankment. Officer Aguilar stopped on the shoulder, looked over the edge, and observed smoke pouring from the vehicle. After quickly evaluating the scene, officer Aguilar selected a safe approach route and began to make his way to the vehicle. Upon arrival, Officer Aguilar noted that the driver was still inside and not moving. Flames were visible in the engine compartment and were quickly moving into the passenger area. Fearing for the unconscious driver's safety, Officer Aguilar entered the vehicle and began pulling him from the wreckage. Aided by a bystander, Officer Aguilar was successful in removing the gas-soaked driver from the vehicle moments before it became fully engulfed in flames. The fire spread quickly, igniting the surrounding grass and brush. Sensing that they were still in danger, Officer Aguilar led the group up the steep hill to safety. The fire continued to burn approximately five acres before it was contained by fire personnel.

Ryan Aguirre

Highway Maintenance Worker

Department of Transportation

11/8/2020

Special Service Award (Silver)

On Sunday November 8, 2020 around 3:00 p m , Ca trans Highway Maintenance Worker Ryan Aguirre and his coworker Steven Garcia were responding to a hard closure on State Route 38 for downed powerlines. Mr. Aguirre and Mr Garcia established the hard closure with signs and traffic cones and parked roughly fifty feet behind the closure to repair snow tire chains on the vehicle they were driving As Mr. Aguirre and Mr. Garcia were under the vehicle adjusting the tire chains, Mr. Aguirre stood above his coworker as a lookout for out of control vehicles. Several minutes went by and as the two employees were attempting to repair the tire chains, an errant vehicle speeding out of control in the snow crashed through the signs, barricades, traffic cones and past a California Highway Patrol vehicle parked across the roadway with its' emergency lights activated. The vehicle crashed into the rear of the pickup that the two employees were working on. Mr. Aguirre, keeping a watchful eye out for vehicles observed the errant vehicle speeding out of control at a high rate of speed and directly towards where they were parked. Without hesitation, Mr. Aguirre instinctively pulled Mr. Garcia out from under the truck and away from imminent danger. This action on Mr. Aguirre's behalf prevented Mr Garcia from being struck while laying on the ground under the pickup truck. Mr. Aguirre placed himself in the direct path of the oncoming vehicle and without his attentiveness and action to pull his coworker to safety, his coworker could have been seriously injured or killed With no regard for his own safety, Mr Aguirre went above and beyond the call of duty The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Transportation Highway Maintenance Worker Ryan A. Aguirre

Brandon S. Akers

Caltrans Electrician II

Department of Transportation

6/18/2009

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the morning of June 18, 2009, Brandon S. Akers was traveling southbound on Highway 101, just south of Santa Maria in Santa Barbara County, when he noticed a Department of Fish and Game pick-up truck weaving ahead of him. At one point, the truck swerved and left the roadway, and Mr. Akers noticed that one of the tires was flat. As the truck returned to the road, Mr. Akers turned on his roof top amber rotating light in an attempt to get the attention of the driver. When this failed, he pulled his Caltrans vehicle alongside the Fish and Game truck and attempted to get the driver's attention. At this point, Mr. Akers immediately recognized that the driver was in some type of physical distress. The Fish and Game truck suddenly accelerated to approximately 80 miles per hour, leaving Mr. Akers' vehicle behind. Traffic was approaching from the rear, and Mr. Akers turned his efforts to warning oncoming motorists. He placed his Caltrans truck directly in the path of these vehicles, providing a "traffic block" and preventing anyone from being struck by the weaving truck. At the same time, Mr. Akers continued to honk his horn and flash his lights in an effort to get the driver's attention and attempt to stop him. The Fish and Game vehicle continued down the road in this manner until it finally left the roadway, crashing into a large oak tree and running through a wire fence. Immediately after the crash, two very large tree branches fell into the roadway. To prevent additional accidents, Mr. Akers left the safety of the shoulder and entered the highway to pull the branches off the road. He remained at the site to render aid to the Fish and Game employee until the California Highway Patrol arrived, at which time he assisted in the driver's rescue from the truck. He provided officials with a detailed account of the entire incident, which made it possible for first responders to properly assess and treat the Department of Fish Game driver.

Mort Allan

FireFighter II

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

12/26/1995

Special Act Award (Gold)

Firefighter II Mort Allan and CDF Battalion Chief Bryan Zollner, On December 26, 1995, performed extraordinary acts of heroism at great personal risk to their safety and lives. After returning from a call, the two firefighters spotted a black column of smoke. Realizing they had a fire in progress, they responded code three to the area. The only equipment the two firefighters had with them was their turnout gear and Chief Zollner's breathing apparatus. As Chief Zollner and Firefighter Allan listened to dispatch, they learned there were victims in the house. Also, they would be the first on the scene and being unable to notify ECC, no one would know they were there. As the two firefighters reached the scene, they observed heavy smoke and fire coming from the front of the house. Chief Zollner and Firefighter Allan donned their turnout gear and headed to the rear of the house Bystanders told them there was a child in the back bedroom. Chief Zollner dove through the bedroom window with Firefighter Allan following behind. Firefighter Allan grabbed onto Chief Zollner's pant leg in order to keep contact with him Both men came out gasping for air. Chief Zolner went back into the thick black smoke and reappeared requesting Firefighter Allan to get the breathing apparatus When Firefighter Allan was returning with the breathing apparatus and a water fire extinguisher, a private citizen came around the house with a small lifeless child in his arms Firefighter Allan instructed the man to take the child to the paramedics standing by and continued on to find Chief Zolner. Chief Zolner was face down on the ground He told Firefighter Allan he thought there were other victims inside the house Firefighter Allan and Volunteer Firefighter Rob Ladd entered through the back of the house with one hose then a second line was brought in and they continued searching for other victims. No other victims were located. Chief Zollner was taken to the hospital via ambulance with Allan following. Once threated and released, Chief Zollner and Firefighter Allan went to see the child that had been rescued It was a miracle they all survived. By disregarding heir own safety, Firefighter Allan and Chief Zollner were instrumental in saving the child's life.

Mark Allee

California Conservation Corps Backcountry Supervisor

California Conservation Corps

6/29/2011

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 29, 2011, at approximately 8:00 a.m., California Conservation Corps Backcountry Supervisor Mark Allee was at the western approach of the Wapama Falls Trail bridge in Yosemite National Park. The rivers were running fast and high due to the wet winter and snowmelt, and the heavy rain and roaring waterfall created intense wind and noise. Mr. Allee was assessing the safety of the bridge when he saw five hikers approaching the bridge from the eastern side. He frantically tried to stop them from crossing by signaling "no" with his arms, but the group began crossing the bridge anyway. Recognizing the threat, Mr. Allee positioned himself on a large boulder just below the bridge to help anyone who might get swept away. Almost immediately, the raging torrent pushed two of the hikers up against the handrail and one was quickly swept off the bridge. The second man's wife was trying to help her husband by holding his head up. Despite the eminent danger, Mr. Allee climbed over the slippery boulder and straddled the bridge railing. He told the woman and a fourth hiker to "get back!" and they began moving backwards off the bridge. Mr. Allee turned to the man and attempted to communicate with him. He unclipped the waist belt of the man's pack and tried to get him to grab onto the strut and post instead of the rail so he could stand up. He struggled to grab the man's belt, but could not reach it. He then tried to grab onto his shirt and pull him up. Unfortunately, the violent flow caused the exhausted man to lose his handhold and he was quickly swept away.

James F. Allen

Fire Apparatus Engineer

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/2/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On February 2, 2008, at approximately 1 p.m., Fire Apparatus Engineer James F. Allen and Firefighter I Frankin T. Johnson were dispatched to a fire in a mobile home park in the community of Delhi. Upon arrival, they saw the fire was well established, involving 75% of the mobile home and venting through the roof. Family members reported that a child was still inside the home in a bedroom. Both men put on their breathing masks, grabbed a fire hose line and entered the home through the front door. Once inside, they encountered heavy fire and falling debris from the collapsing roof. They searched for a doorway along the adjoining living room wall with no success and were unable to progress to the rear of the home due to the flames. Engineer Allen noticed that the fire had weakened the interior living room wall and began pushing on it. His effort created an access point to the adjoining bedroom. Looking into the bedroom, he saw the fire beginning to burn through the top of the closed bedroom door and starting to flash over the ceiling. He directed his hose stream to the top of the door area knocking down the flames. Firefighter Johnson entered the bedroom and found a 12-year old boy laying face down. Together they picked the boy up and passed him through a small bedroom window to a paramedic and bystander who were in front of the home. Engineer Allen and Firefighter Johnson's actions during this rescue were responsible for saving the life of this young boy.

Monica Alvarado

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/9/1991

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 9, 1991 at approximately 8:40 p.m., State Traffic Officer Monica Alvarado responded to a radio call of a male pedestrian threatening to commit suicide by jumping from the freeway onto a surface street below. Upon arriving at the location, Officer Alvarado observed a male standing on the shoulder looking over the freeway guardrail onto the street below. Officer Alvarado exited her vehicle and began approaching the individual. As she moved closer he shouted "Stay away or I'll jump!" He then straddled the guardrail, turned towards her and shouted "Don't come any closer!" while pulling his other leg over the railing. As the man began to push himself off the railing, Officer Alvarado leapt at him, grabbing the sleeve of his jacket. As she gained hold of his jacket, she was pulled against and halfway over the metal railing. Due to the size and weight of the man, Officer Alvarado could not pull him to safety. Realizing that she could not hold onto him for any lengthy period of time, she released her grip with one hand and used the microphone cord of her radio extender to request assistance, holding onto the suspect for approximately two and a half minutes until assistance arrived.

Andrew M. Alvarez

Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/18/1999

Special Service Award (Silver)

On December 18, 1999, at 4:15 p.m., the Orange County Communications Center received numerous cellular telephone calls of a possible suicide attempt. The woman, according to callers, was sitting on a ledge and hanging over the side of the transition overpass from northbound Interstate 5 to northbound State Route 73. Officer Ricardo Baeza, the first officer to arrive on the scene, observed the woman sitting on the northbound center divider concrete barrier ledge with her legs hanging over the side and her hands down by her sides as if to use them to push herself off of the wall. It appeared to Officer Baeza that the woman was preparing to jump onto the roadway below, a distance of approximately 80 feet. Officer Baeza was able to position himself on the southbound State Route 73 center divider, directly across from the woman, and was attempting to persuade her from jumping. The woman was visibly upset, crying and yelling that she no longer wanted to live. Officer Andrew Alvarez also responded to the scene and positioned himself on the northbound side, south of the distraught woman. As Officer Baeza continued to communicate with the woman and to distract her, Officer Alvarez approached her from the opposite side. He stopped when the woman saw him approaching and continued to scream that she did not want to live and she was going to jump. Sergeant Felipe Lugo, Jr. arriving on the scene, also positioned himself north of the woman opposite Officer Alvarez. Officer Alvarez was able to direct the woman's attention to himself while Sergeant Lugo rushed toward the woman grabbing and pulling her off of the wall and onto the roadway. Officers Baeza, Alvarez, and Sergeant Lugo all descended upon the woman, and after a brief struggle, took her into protective custody. The State Of CA

Benjamin Anderson

Maintenance Worker

Department of Transportation

3/1/2018

Special Service Award (Silver)

On March 1, 2018, around 5:00 p.m., California Department of Transportation Highway Maintenance Worker Benjamin (Ben) Anderson and Maintenance Supervisor, Lonnie Swartout were p owing snow when Mr. Swartout noticed tire tracks that shot through a snow berm and down a steep embankment. When Mr. Anderson went toward the tracks, he heard a woman screaming for help. Unable to see her or the vehicle due to the dark and snowy conditions, he grabbed his handheld radio and flashlight and went down the steep embankment. Following the screaming voice, he located the woman and a tipped sport utility vehicle, which had slipped about 100 feet off the roadway She was positioned on the downhill side in front of the vehicle and was unable to move herself due to injuries from the wreck. To prevent the vehicle from potentially crushing her, Mr Anderson dragged her 30 feet away to a safer location. She advised Mr Anderson that her husband was stuck inside of the vehicle and unable to move due to injuries. Immediately, Mr Anderson radioed to California Department of Transportation Highway Maintenance Leadworker Thomas Britt, Mr Swartout and dispatch on the conditions of the incident and requested the tools necessary for extrication of the couple. Mr. Anderson gave her his snow jacket, then headed to the vehicle to assist her husband who was unable to move and could barely breathe due to a cage of puppies being pinned underneath his abdomen Mr Anderson ran back uphill to grab tools from his truck He used bolt cutters to cut out the cage, making a hole wide enough to save the puppies and allowing the husband to expand his stomach to breathe better. Additional rescue personnel arrived on scene who then secured the wife to a backboard and hauled her to the ambulance.

Mr Anderson then used an ax and handsaw to cut out the front windshield allowing the rescue personnel inside of the vehicle to provide aid to the husband He made over ten trips up and down the embankment, grabbing tools, water, and clothing to assist in the extrication and medical care of the couple. After six hours on scene, and with the help of additional rescue personnel, there was enough manpower to successfully cut out the husband, set up a low-angle rope rescue haul line, and safely pull him 100 feet back to the highway With no regard to his own safety, Mr Anderson went above and beyond the call of duty The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation Highway Maintenance Worker Benjamin Anderson.

Howard W. Anderson

Heavy Equipment Mechanic

Department of Transportation

9/30/1970

Special Act Award (Gold)

In early June of 1970, Howard W. Anderson, a Heavy Equipment Mechanic, knowingly put his own life in extreme jeopardy while attempting to rescue a fellow employee trapped in a fire in the Marysville equipment maintenance shop of the Division of Highways. The fire followed a gasoline explosion that completely engulfed George Mote, a fellow mechanic. Mr. Anderson completely disregarded his personal safety while battling the flames which reached 30 feet high in the air, scorching the ceiling of the building, as he continued to spray fire extinguishing material onto the flames nearest Mr. Mote until the supply was exhausted and help arrived. Howard Anderson sustained second and third degree burns to his face and left hand, and later became disabled due to his injuries from the rescue attempt. Unfortunately, the co-worker did not survive the accident. Mr. Anderson exemplifies the very essence of a hero who thought of nothing more than trying to save his fellow man.

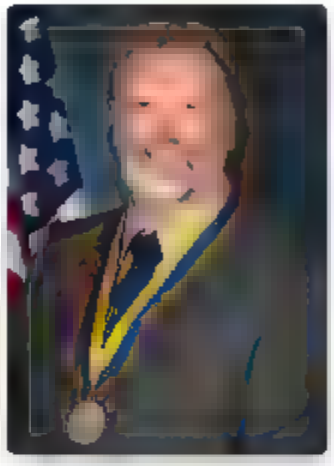
James D. Anderson

Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

1/29/2016

Special Service Award (Silver)



On January 29, 2016, at 4:05 p.m. it was very wet and rainy, when a pickup truck struck a guardrail on westbound I-80, left the roadway, overturned, and rolled down the steep embankment, landing upside down in Canyon Creek below. A Caltrans sand truck saw the incident and put out a call for help. Caltrans Equipment Operator II James Anderson was nearby and arrived at the scene along with California Highway Patrol Officers Andy Murrill and Kevin Manford. They saw the driver outside of the truck yelling that a female passenger was still trapped inside. The three men jumped into the freezing creek and waded through chest deep water to reach a visibly injured, bleeding and nearly unresponsive woman whose head was barely above the water. Mr. Anderson was able to cut the woman free from her seat belt, pull her out of the vehicle, and, with the officers' assistance, carry her back across the swiftly moving current of Canyon Creek. Officers Murrill and Manford were helping him lift the woman out of the creek when he lost his footing and was in danger of being swept downstream. Caltrans co-worker Kenneth Myers was on the embankment and grabbed his belt, stopping the officers, Mr. Anderson, and the woman from being carried off down the creek and into a several hundred foot long culvert pipe taking the rushing water underneath Interstate 80. Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor Rodney Walker arrived, climbed down the embankment, and assisted the men with lifting the woman out of the water and carrying her up the very steep embankment to wait for the ambulance.

John Anderson

Fremont Police Department, Officer

Other

11/1/2007

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On November 1, 2007, at approximately 0902 hours, Fremont Police Officers John Anderson and Brian Shadle were on a traffic stop in front of an apartment complex at 3600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Fremont, California. Citizens advised the officers of a fire at one of the apartment buildings. The officers ran into the complex and found a fully engulfed second-story apartment. They were told a person might be trapped. The officers radioed for help and then chose to attempt a rescue. Both officers forced open a locked apartment door and were faced with high heat, flames, and smoke. The officers crawled in just a few feet before being forced out. They quickly got some breathes and re-entered, finding a 40-year-old female victim about 3-5 feet inside. They grabbed her legs and dragged her out. Due to their efforts, the victim survived with burns over 40 of her body and severe smoke inhalation.

Tena G. Anderson

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/26/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Battalion Chief Joseph W. Waterman, Fire Captain Tena G. Anderson and Heavy Fire Equipment Operator (HFEO) Fredrick Westrip performed an act of heroism at risk to their own personal safety during the Straylor Fire in Butte County when they aided in the successful rescue and evacuation of three individuals from a downed Jet Ranger helicopter. On July 26, 2004, the helicopter was surveying the area to provide spot fire reports. The helicopter crashed in an area threatened by a rapidly growing spot fire. The fire continued to grow steadily as it neared the downed craft with occupants trapped inside. Upon reaching the downed helicopter, which had crashed in a steep terrain and brush area, Battalion Chief Waterman instructed and assisted additional firefighters on the scene to fall trees in the clearing to create a landing zone for a helicopter rescue. As they worked, reports came in on his radio that fire jumped the line and was approximately 1,000 feet below their position. Three individuals from the helicopter required immediate medical assistance. Two individuals suffered broken backs and one individual broke their leg and sternum.

Fire Captain Anderson provided medical attention to the injured and emotional support to other firefighters in the area that had not witnessed such an incident. HFEO Westrip witnessed the crash, parked his vehicle, and made his way up the steep slope to the crash site. He administered first aid to the injured. As the fire continued to get closer to the helicopter and personnel, Battalion Chief Waterman, Fire Captain Anderson and HFEO Westrip coordinated and participated in the extraction, stabilized medical treatment and care to the three injured individuals trapped in the downed helicopter and assisted in the evacuation of some 50 rescuers. The fire below them gained intensity and eventually completely burned over the entire site where the helicopter had crashed

Dan Angel

Heavy Fire Equiptment Operator

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/21/1980

Special Act Award (Gold)

On February 21, 1980, Heavy Fire Equipment Operator Dan Angel performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his own safety and life by saving the lives of three persons. At approximately 2 15 a m , State Forest Ranger II Moises Estrada received a phone call from a Caltrans dispatcher requesting assistance for three Caltrans employees stranded in a vehicle by flood waters on the Puerto La Cruz Creek Forest Ranger Estrada summoned Dan Angel and proceeded to the incident location. Upon arrival they found a Caltrans truck stalled in a fast moving flood waters approximately four feet deep Dan Angel immediately tied the end of a 150 foot rope around his waist, secured it to the sedan and proceeded into the swift current He soon realized the rope was too short to reach the stranded Caltrans employees and signaled Ranger Estrada to drive the sedan partially into the raging creek. Upon safely reaching the stranded vehicle and employees, Mr Angel tied the rope to the truck and instructed the employees to make their way to safely along the life line. As the members of the stranded party and Mr Angel made their way to safety, the roadbed began disintegrating leaving a deep chasm very close to where the vehicle was stalled.

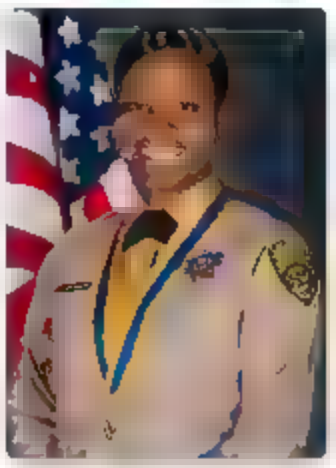
Jaymi Appleberry

Correctional Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

9/22/2015

Special Act Award (Gold)



On September 22, 2015, at 2:15 a.m., off-duty Correctional Officer Jaymi Appleberry returned to her apartment with a friend. After Officer Appleberry pulled into a parking spot, the friend got out on the passenger side, and saw a man armed with a pistol walking toward her. The friend jumped back into the car and tried to lock the door. The armed man opened the passenger door and put a gun to her friend's head. He also pointed the gun at Officer Appleberry. The gunman grabbed the friend's hair with his free hand. The gunman then fell, pulling her out of the car. Fearing for her friend's safety, Officer Appleberry jumped out of the car, ran around the vehicle and fought with the gunman for control of the weapon. The gunman tried to point the pistol at Officer Appleberry's face. She forced the pistol into the air as the gunman fired two shots. At this point, the friend was able to help Appleberry in the fight. Officer Appleberry gained control of the gun. She and her friend then ran from the assailant, but he followed. Officer Appleberry pointed the gun at the assailant and pulled the trigger. The gun did not fire, but her act caused the assailant to run away. Officer Appleberry credits her CDCR self-defense training for helping her survive.

Rick Applegate

Sergeant

Department of Justice

4/12/2012

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On Apri 12, 2012, responding to reports of shots fired and officers down, Sergeant Rick App egate, a ong with ten other officers of the Modesto po ice department, arrived on scene to find Stanislaus Co unty Sheriff's Deputy Bob Paris and civi ian locksmith G endon Engert lying unconscious outside the front door leading to the suspect's apartment front door. Armed with an arsenal, the suspect had barricaded himself inside his apartment and was exchanging fire with a second deputy, Deputy Mike Glinskas, who was pinned down and issued the call for help. Placing ballistic shields across the front passenger window of a Modesto police car, a group of officers took cover on the driver's side and used the vehicle as mobile cover to advance on the apartment whi e the remaining officers dep oyed a flash bang diversionary device. Their coordinated efforts were successfu and they were ab e to extract Glinskas and escort him to safety and medical attention. They were also able to recover Paris and Engert, both of whom had unfortunately been mortally wounded After an e even hour standoff, the suspect took his own ife The actions of Sergeant App egate and his fellow officers prevented the dead y standoff from esca ating further and threatening more lives.

Angel Arceo

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/31/2013

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 31, 2013, at approximately 1:30 p.m., California Highway Patrol Officer Angel Arceo responded to a traffic collision in San Joaquin County involving a fuel tanker truck and trailer carrying approximately 8,400 gallons of gas. The tanker trailer ruptured and ignited the gasoline as it spilled out onto the roadway. The truck and trailer exploded and fire quickly spread across the roadway and along the shoulder igniting grass, structures, and four power poles. Live power lines fell across the front yard and driveway of a house and were approximately two feet off the ground. The resident, a woman, was recovering from hip surgery when she heard the explosion and saw fire spreading across her front yard near her propane tank. She made her way onto the driveway, but became trapped as the flames quickly spread to both sides. When Officer Arceo arrived he saw the woman standing at the end of her driveway. He quickly ran towards her and she explained the situation. Fearing for her life, Officer Arceo jumped over the power lines and carried her to safety as the fire burned the entire front and east side of her property. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to Officer Angel Arceo

Joel D. Arding

California State Police Officer

Department of General Services

5/10/1994

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 4 00 pm while en route home fo owing a tour of duty, Officer Arding observed two Stockton Po ice Officers struggling with a man who was resisting their efforts to pull him from McLeod Lake (the Stockton deep water channel). The officers were hanging over the railing, attempting to hold him by his be t. Officer Arding stopped to render assistance and advised the officers that he was wi ing to enter the water, if necessary At that point, the man's belt broke and he slipped from the officer's grasp The man swam approximately 60 feet toward the center of the channel where he began to flounder. After a short time, he became motion ess and began floating face down in the water. Officer Arding then jumped from the railing (10 feet above the water) into the frigid channel. The man was not breathing when Officer Arding reached him Officer Arding assumed a rescue hold on the man and swam him back to the north bank of the channel He detected the man was breathing and while unable to lift him out of the water, held the man for five minutes treading water until a boat arrived to assist. Officer Arding used the water rescue technique of cradling the man's chin in the bend of his e bow to keep his head above water and open his airway. The man, who was reported in serious condition, is expected to make a full recovery

Tracy Eugene Armstead

Structural Steel Painter

Department of Transportation

9/8/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 8, 2008, Tracy Eugene Armstead was building a work platform to paint the bridge deck over the Dominguez Channel in Long Beach, when his co-workers - George Bedolla, John Reid, and Ray Gaudry - suddenly called out to alert him that they believed a suicidal man was in the water. They had witnessed a man run down the embankment toward the water and purposely jump into the channel in what appeared to be a suicide attempt. Mr. Bedolla ran to his truck to call 911 and then dialed their supervisor for more assistance. After hitting the water, the current moved the suicidal man rapidly downstream. Realizing that the man was drowning and without regard to his personal safety, Mr. Armstead jumped from the bridge where he was working to come to the aid of the drowning man. Swimming as fast as he could, Mr. Armstead tried to reach the drowning man but could not grasp him due to the strong current and his heavy wet clothing. As the man moved farther away from Mr. Armstead's reach and due to his own exhaustion of trying to swim in the fast current, Mr. Armstead eventually had to abandon his brave attempt to save the man's life. Paramedics arrived shortly thereafter and were able to pull the man from the water and begin CPR. Sadly, the man did not survive.

Bernard O. Arney

Highway Maintenance Technician II

Department of Transportation

3/4/1971

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 4, 1971, at 8 a.m., Highway Maintenance Technician II Bernard O. Arney, he ped save the ife of a woman stranded in the Smith River near Crescent City Mr Arney was driving his pickup truck west en route to an assignment down Highway 199 when he noticed skid marks and a reflector post knocked down Mr Arney stopped, and went to the edge of the road. Earlier, a 72-year-old Fremont, CA woman was driving east approximately 20 miles from the junction with Highway 101 north of Crescent City Her passenger was a 24-year-old woman. The women's car traveled over a narrow, twisting portion of Highway 199 The pavement was s ick from the falling rain and snow. Rounding one sharp corner the car went out of control and plummeted over the bank and into the icy, fast moving Smith River The vehic e was sideways in the river and the younger woman was cinging to the top of the passenger side door yelling for help. The current was pu ing her downstream. Mr. Arney heard her say that she was slipping and cou dn't hang on much longer. He sprinted back up the bank and stopped the first passing car and told the driver to go to Gasquet, call the Highway Patrol, an ambu ance and wrecker, and send his foreman, Chuck Hafley to the scene. Mr. Arney then stopped two truckers and asked for a rope. Mr. Arney raced down the bank again He tied the rope around his chest, dove into the river upstream from the car, and et the current sweep him down to the vehicle. He clambered onto the trunk, over the roof, and dropped down next to the 24-year-old woman, who by this time was about to go under. Mr. Arney grabbed her, put the rope under her arms, got back on top of the car and hauled up on the rope, while trying to keep her mouth above water. Mr. Arney asked the woman if she could swim, she answered "no, not a stroke" Sensing her strength was about to give out, he directed her to take a deep breath, and hold it, assuring her that she would be back on shore by the time she needed to take another breath. Mr. Arney was ready to have the men on shore tug her to safety, but then found the rope was snagged and they couldn't pu her safely Just then Foreman Chuck Hafley arrived on the scene, donned a wet suit, fixed a second rope to himself and swam out to help Mr Arney Mr Hafley held the woman up while Mr. Arney freed the first rope. The other men on shore pu ed and she came out; unfortunately, the woman's older driving companion did not survive the p.unge into the river.

Arturo Arzaga

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

2/25/2007

Special Service Award (Silver)

On February 25, 2007, California Department of Transportation employees Arturo Arzaga and Eric Perkins were supervising a fourteen person volunteer work crew removing debris and weeds from the shoulder of State Route 60 at Etiwanda Avenue, a high traffic area in Riverside County. At approximately 10 00 a m , the crew gathered for a break around the department van when a drunken motorist, being pursued by the CHP, lost control of his car and crashed into the van. The sudden impact flipped the van on its side and forced it down an embankment, trapping a man underneath, injuring five people, and scattering the rest of the volunteer crew from the crash scene. Mr. Arzaga and Mr. Perkins immediately called 9-1-1 and assessed their crew for injuries. Despite the heavy traffic and risk to personal safety due to the van's position on the embankment, Mr. Arzaga and Mr Perkins, with the help of their non-injured crew members, physically lifted the van off their trapped co-worker and instructed a crew member to watch over him until the paramedics arrived. Mr. Arzaga then went to assist a woman who was unable to breathe as the impact of the car hitting the van had thrown her body forward and slammed her face down into the ground He stayed with her until paramedics arrived. Mr. Arzaga and Mr. Perkins kept their composure throughout the chaos of the accident and its aftermath by lending assistance to the injured and calming the rest of the volunteer crew who were in shock. As a result of their immediate actions the crew member survived. Mr. Arzaga's assistance contributed to the woman's survival in spite of suffering severe injuries Four other crew members were treated for minor injuries and released.

Kevin Austin

Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/17/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 6 30 p m , Officers Rene Galindo and Kevin Austin of the Southern Division Commercial Unit were on patrol in the South Los Angeles Area. Both officers monitored and responded to a call of a distraught and suicidal woman who had climbed out onto the ledge of the State Route 91 freeway overcrossing. Officer Austin quickly directed the Sheriff's department to stop all north and southbound traffic As Officer Galindo's arrival, he observed the one female standing on a two inch ledge, clinging to the north edge of the freeway, directly over the traffic lanes of the Main Street under crossing. She was slowly moving further out over the traffic lanes and in danger of falling. Officer Galindo could see the woman was becoming fatigued, however she remained inaccessible to emergency scene personnel due to an adjacent concrete barrier wall. The fire department was dispatched, yet it was doubtful that the woman's strength would hold out long enough to wait for their arrival Officer Galindo formed a plan to use the height of his enforcement vehicle as a rescue platform and subsequently positioned it directly above her location He then climbed onto the shell of the enforcement truck and leaned over the wall, taking hold of the woman and preventing her from falling As Officer Austin observed Officer Rene Galindo attempting to rescue the woman, Officer Austin climbed up on top of the vehicle, leaned over the wall While Officer Galindo was holding onto the wall with his left hand, he used his right hand to quickly grab the females' clothing down near the rear waist area. As Officer Galindo struggled with one arm to bring the female up to his position near the top of the wall, Officer Austin then grabbed the females pony tail with his right hand and her left arm with his left hand At this point the female became violently combative as both officers struggled to pull her over the retaining wall. The officers were subsequently able to control and secure the female on the freeway side of the wall.

Anival Avila

Correctional Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

5/24/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 24, 2017, at 10:20 a.m. in the Pelican Bay State Prison outdoor exercise yard, with approximately three hundred inmates, a one-on-one fight started. While responding staff were attempting to quell the incident, approximately 130 inmates, began rushing and attacking the officers. Officer Anival Avila responded to the fight. As the combative inmates were being separated, a large group of inmates - who had previously been in a prone position - got up on their feet and ran towards the officers. Officer Avila gave orders to which no inmates complied. Officer Avila heard someone say 'get the gate'. Officer Avila attempted to close the gate, but was unable to as inmates reached the gate and began attacking him before he could secure it. Officer Avila saw a large group of inmates attacking his yard sergeant. Fearing that the sergeant would receive great bodily injury due to the number of attacking inmates, Officer Avila made his way to assist him utilizing his baton as inmates were attacking and hitting him. Fearing for his own life, and the lives of his fellow officers, he utilized his baton not knowing if and where the baton strikes made contact. Officer Avila was quickly overpowered and was trapped on the fence. He was hit several times in the head and upper torso by several inmates. As an inmate grabbed Officer Avila's baton, Officer Avila was able to maintain his grip and maintain control of his baton. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Avila's heroic act saved the lives of fellow officers and inmates in the face of a large prison fight. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctional Officer Anival Avila

David Avila

Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/28/1996

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 2:46 a.m., a tractor/trailer collided with another tractor/trailer which had slowed down due to a previous traffic collision at Interstate 10 and Holt Boulevard involving a tractor/trailer and two passenger vehicles. The driver had dozed off, unaware of the slow moving traffic and had not taken any evasive action to prevent an accident. His vehicle then veered to the left into the number two and three lanes. The tractor/trailer, still out of control, struck five passenger vehicles and passed two tractor/trailers colliding with the rear trailer of a set of double trailers in the number four lane. The tractor burst into flames. His legs were trapped by the dashboard and engine components which collapsed upon impact. Officers on the scene broadcasted the collision into the Inland Communications Center and went to the aid of the drivers in the passenger cars unaware the driver of the burning tractor was still inside. Officers Heller, Avila, Finn and Battle responded to the scene and upon arrival heard the trapped driver's cries for help and saw the flames rapidly spreading from the tractor to the trailer, as well as to the trailer it had struck. The officers attempted to open the driver's side door to free the driver but the severity of the collision left the door twisted and jammed closed. The officer tried to reassure the driver as they reached into the burning truck, gasping the driver's shoulders and arms in an attempt to pull him free. As Officers Finn and Battle attempted to free the driver, Officers Heller and Avila doused the trapped driver with fire extinguishers and attempted to pull the jammed door open. The flames were spreading rapidly through the cab of the truck to the sleeper berth and upholstery. The driver was still conscious and calling for help. The entire right side of the tractor, its trailer, and the trailer it had struck were on fire. The tractor's fuel tank had ruptured and gasoline was rushing down the traffic lanes towards the other vehicles. The officers continued their efforts to free the trapped driver as the flames spread. All four officers remained with the driver, still trying to free him and extinguish the flames. After depleting several fire extinguishers and unable to pry the tractor door open, they were forced to move to a place of safety due to the intensity of the fire. At this point, the tractor and trailer were fully engulfed, with flames reaching 30 to 40 feet in the air. Unfortunately, the driver could not be saved due to fatal injuries from the collision and fire.

Bruce Douglas Ayers

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/24/1969

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 7 pm, State Traffic Officer Bruce D Ayers arrived on the scene of an accident just as a Volkswagen with two fema e occupants struck the rear of one of the vehic es invo ved in the initial crash. Upon impact, the interior of the Volkswagen was drenched in gaso ine and burst into a ball of flames 10-15 feet high, engu fing the entire vehicle. Officer Byers ran to open the driver's door, but it was locked He then ran to the passenger side where another person had opened the door, but was driven back by the intense heat and flames. Officer Ayers grabbed the clothing of the passenger and pulled her away from the vehicle. The victim's hair and face were on fire and her legs and hands were flaming Officer Ayers and another officer used their hands and Officer Ayer's coat to smother the flames Officer Ayers then carried the victim to the shou der and administered first aid. The victim had third degree burns over 45% of her body, but recovered. Officer Ayers received burns on his hands and his hair was singed.

Eric Ayers

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/9/2021

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 9, 2021, just after noon, Fire Captain Eric Ayers was traveling with his daughter south of Grass Valley. Captain Ayers came upon a major car accident with a large SUV overturned with major front-end damage. He stopped to help, and noticed a fire under the engine compartment as well as a person trapped in the driver's seat. Captain Ayers told his daughter to collect fire extinguishers and cutting tools from passing cars. The trapped driver could not be reached through the passenger doors or the sunroof, as the fire engulfed the front of the vehicle and began spreading into the passenger compartment. Entering through the rear, Captain Ayers tried to remove the driver, but was trapped by the driver seatbelt. As the heat and smoke forced him back out of the vehicle, he found his daughter had collected three fire extinguishers to put out the flames. Unfortunately, they were not enough. With the help of an additional off duty firefighter and passing ambulance staff, Captain Ayers attempted to free the driver through the sunroof to no avail. Another passing motorist gave Captain Ayers a reciprocating saw that he used to expand the sunroof, but it was not until the first responding fire engine arrived that the driver was finally freed and the fire extinguished. The driver was admitted to UCDMC burn unit with extensive injuries. Without Captain Ayers, his daughter, and others on the scene, the driver would not have survived. With no regard for his own safety, Captain Ayers went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Eric Ayers

Ryan Ayers

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/6/2021

Special Act Award (Gold)

In the afternoon of August 6, 2021, Officer Ryan Ayers was off-duty and driving his personal vehicle northbound on US-101 with his family. As they approached the intersection of US-101 and Jonata Park Road, he saw a large cloud of dust directing his attention to a semitruck stopped in the center median field scattered with debris from vehicle parts. After making a U-turn, he saw another semitruck which had been driven off the roadway and crashed through a fence into bushes. Officer Ayers stopped and made his way to the crashed semitruck that was emitting smoke from the engine compartment. He instructed a bystander to get a fire extinguisher from the other semitruck in the center median. Without regard for his own safety, Officer Ayers climbed up to the driver's door and attempted to open it; however, it would not open. He climbed around the load of pallets strapped onto the flatbed trailer, made his way to the passenger door, and opened it. The male driver was slumped over in the driver's seat, unresponsive and bleeding. Officer Ayers cleared the wreckage within the cab to gain access to the unconscious driver as heavy smoke and flames were filling the cab. While risking smoke inhalation and burns, Officer Ayers unbuckled the driver's seat belt and single handedly carried him out through the passenger door while surrounded by flames. The male driver regained consciousness as Officer Ayers placed him on the ground away from the semitruck which was fully engulfed in flames only seconds later. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Ryan Ayers for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Eric R. Ayers

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

12/28/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 28, 2007, CAL FIRE Captain Eric R. Ayers was conducting routine business in Susanville when he heard an emergency dispatch that a passenger vehicle had lost control due to black ice on the road, traveled down a 30 foot embankment and landed upside down in approximately four feet of water in the Susan River. He notified the Emergency Command Center by radio that he was responding As the first emergency responder to arrive, Captain Ayers quickly slid down the snow covered embankment, entered the icy water and swam to the vehicle, where he found a woman suspended upside down by her seatbelt with her head under water. While holding her head out of the water so she could breathe, Captain Ayers used his knife to cut the seatbelt loose, freed her from the vehicle, and assisted her back to the riverbank Both were treated for hypothermia and released with no further injuries or complications.

Gene Bach

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

8/20/1997

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of August 20, 1997, Fire Captain Gene Bach, a Captain at the Trinity River Conservation Camp was traveling with his inmate crew to a work project at Whiskeytown National Park. As Captain Bach and his crew proceeded down the east side of Buckhorn Summit, they observed a car teetering over a cliff with the vehicle's nose pointing down and the rear wheels suspended in mid-air. Captain Bach and his crew pulled over to the side of the road to assist the female driver of the vehicle. The driver of the vehicle had taken steps to try and save herself from her precarious situation. She put her vehicle in park, turned off the radio, headlights, ignition and unfastened her seat belt. She attempted to open her door, but was unsuccessful. Afraid to move, she waited for someone to stop and help. As cars continued to pass her by, she wondered if anyone would stop to help and thought this was not a good way to start her birthday. She had just turned 48. When Captain Bach saw the vehicle dangling over the cliff, he never stopped to think of his own safety. He rushed to Ms. White's vehicle, threw open the door and literally swept her into his arms as they rolled backwards into the mud. As Captain Bach and the woman cleared the vehicle, it plunged 100 feet down the cliff, flipped once and came to rest next to a tree. As the vehicle began its descent, it rolled over Captain Bach's foot. Fortunately, Captain Bach was uninjured

Jerry Bachmann

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

10/5/2011

Special Service Award (Silver)

On October 5, 2011, at approximately 3:00 p.m., Caltrans Equipment Operator II's, Jerry Bachmann and Johnnie James were driving on remote Highway 199 when they noticed a downed culvert marker and fresh tire tracks leaving the roadway. Mr. James looked in the rear view mirror and saw an upside-down vehicle resting precariously against a tree over a steep bank leading down to the Smith River. They went down to check out the situation. The occupants were an elderly couple, both injured but conscious. The man was half in/half out of the passenger side window, held only by his seatbelt. He had massive head injuries and was having difficulty breathing. The female driver was inside of the flipped vehicle, feet on the door and leaning against the inside roof. She had a broken wrist. Mr. James pulled the woman out of the car and placed her on the bank while Mr. Bachmann covered her with his coat. With great difficulty, Mr. James freed the man from his seatbelt. As emergency responders arrived, large, loose rocks started rolling down on them. Mr. Bachmann used his body and a fire dept. hat to protect the woman from the falling rocks. At one point he was holding the woman with one hand, a tree with the other, and an emergency responder was standing on his leg to balance him. Mr. Bachmann assisted the injured man into the rescue basket, unfortunately, the man suffered a heart attack as they were pulling him up and passed away later that night. The woman fully recovered.

Ricardo E. Baeza

Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/18/1999

Special Service Award (Silver)

On December 18, 1999, at 4:15 p.m. the Orange County Communications Center received numerous cellular telephone calls of a possible suicide attempt. The woman, according to callers, was sitting on a ledge and hanging over the side of the transition overpass from northbound Interstate 5 to northbound State Route 73. Officer Ricardo Baeza, the first officer to arrive on the scene, observed the woman sitting on the northbound center divider concrete barrier ledge with her legs hanging over the side and her hands down by her sides as if to use them to push herself off of the wall. It appeared to Officer Baeza that the woman was preparing to jump onto the roadway below, a distance of approximately 80 feet. Officer Baeza was able to position himself on the southbound State Route 73 center divider, directly across from the woman, and was attempting to persuade her from jumping. The woman was visibly upset, crying and yelling that she no longer wanted to live. Officer Andrew Alvarez also responded to the scene and positioned himself on the northbound side, south of the distraught woman. As Officer Baeza continued to communicate with the woman and to distract her, Officer Alvarez approached her from the opposite side. He stopped when the woman saw him approaching and continued to scream that she did not want to live and she was going to jump. Sergeant Felipe Lugo, Jr. arriving on the scene, also positioned himself north of the woman opposite Officer Alvarez. Officer Alvarez was able to direct the woman's attention to himself while Sergeant Lugo rushed toward the woman grabbing and pulling her off of the wall and onto the roadway. Officers Baeza, Alvarez, and Sergeant Lugo all descended upon the woman, and after a brief struggle, took her into protective custody.

Jeffrey Baird

Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

7/26/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 26, 2007, at approximately 2 30 p m , employees of Scaled Composites, an aerospace development company at Mojave Air and Space Port, were working near two large tanks of nitrous oxide gas when one of the carbon fiber tanks exploded CHP Sergeants Jeffrey Baird and Mark McCormack along with Officers Jack Borne, Jesse Borne, Stephen Hunsaker, Byron Jobe, Jeffrey Nousch and Roberta Record responded to the scene The toxic gas fumes and carbon fiber particles from the explosion posed a respiratory hazard The second tank, which contained 10,000 pounds of nitrous oxide gas, was also damaged and in danger of exploding Because of the significant hazard and seriousness of the victims' injuries, the first responders could not wait for a hazardous materia team, so CHP personnel entered and rendered aid to the victims They helped place two victims onto backboards, and carried them to a waiting life flight he icopter, two other victims were placed in ambulances and triaged at a safe zone CHP personnel remained on site evacuating the remaining Mojave Air and Space Port employees to a safe area Due to the heroic efforts of these men and women, three of the four victims were successfully rescued and lived

Donald Baker

Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/30/1978

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 30, 1978, Officers Don Baker and Lee Dewhirst, were on patrol along U S 101 around midnight when they saw a ball of flames ahead of them. Approaching the scene, they saw a burning van with flames spurting out 30 feet from the windows and the top As the officers approached on foot, Officer Baker heard a voice crying "help me " He tugged the van's handle but it was jammed When flames forced the officers back, they went back for a pry bar. Officer Dewhirst managed to get close enough to jam the bar under a hinge and pu hard, but the effort threw his back out. Officer Baker quickly took over and worked on the door, instructing bystanders to throw dirt through the window to cut the flames When the door finally came free he dragged the driver out The van had been full of clothing that had fallen on the man and protected him Officer Baker reached him just as the last layer of clothing began to burn the man's foot and arm were protruding from the pile of clothes and were severe y burned The driver said later that he was so sure he would die that he had given himse f the last rites

Wallace V. Baker

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

6/25/1975

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 6, 1975, California Highway Patrol Officer Wallace V. Baker was chasing a runaway speeder at more than 100 m p h along Interstate 10 near Pamona. The errant driver lost control of his vehicle and it smashed into the rear of a station wagon that immediately burst into flames At first, Officer Baker thought the driver of the wagon had the situation under control, as he saw him get out and assist a woman passenger from the burning vehicle But then the driver tried to get back into the station wagon, where his wife was unconscious and trapped in the burning vehicle The driver did his best but was driven back by the flames Officer Baker helped the driver and the other woman passenger to safety, then ran back to the burning wreck, after making sure the speeder who had caused the accident was out of his own car and under restraint Despite warnings of bystanders who had collected nearby, Officer Baker pushed his way inside and dragged the driver's wife out Fifteen seconds later, the fuel tank exploded.

Allyn Ball

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/12/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 12, 2008, California Highway Patrol Sergeant John Lago and Officer Allyn Ball arrived on the scene of a head-on collision involving a Metro ink Commuter Train and a Union Pacific freight train in the City of Chatsworth. The collision occurred during the height of rush hour, resulting in injuries and death to many people In addition to the widespread wreckage from the collision, it had also caused a large fire that quickly began to engulf the freight train and Metrolink locomotives When Officer Allyn Ball arrived, he ran toward the burning Union Pacific train and crawled under the unstable freight cars in order to access the scene and ook for victims. Officer Ball located and provided first aid to a disorientated, injured victim walking near the wreckage He and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Deputy Alfred Guerrero then entered one of the passenger cars where they encountered thick smoke and heat from the adjacent fire They located more injured victims, provided emergency first aid and assisted them in evacuating the car Officer Ball was then relieved from the freight car by firefighters Meanwhile, Sergeant John Lago arrived on scene and ran toward a still burning Union Pacific Train. He climbed into the freight locomotive in an attempt to locate the engineer and searched through the smoky car until he was advised by a fire captain the freight car was about to explode Once the scene was stabilized, Sergeant Lago re-entered the train with other emergency personnel Together they formed a human chain to remove the deceased occupants located in the wreckage At one point a young woman on a stretcher, who was alive but suffering from severe injuries, was handed to Officer Ball. With the assistance of Sergeant Lago and five other CHP officers, Officer Ball and Sergeant Lago carried the young woman on a stretcher through the wreckage to medical personnel The actions of Sergeant Lago and Officer Ball, without regard for their own safety, prevented further injuries or death to victims involved in this train collision, and were crucial in removing the serious and fatally wounded passengers

Chris Ball

Caltrans Highway Equipment Operator

Department of Transportation

12/31/2005

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 3.00 a.m on December 31, 2005, California Department of Transportation employee Chris Ball was operating a plow truck in the midst of a major winter storm. He was instructed to drive west in the east bound lanes to open a traffic lane after the first of four mud and rock slides occurred Upon his arrival, he found the mud and rock was four to seven feet deep and created a lake over three feet deep in the center of the highway. While working to remove slide material, an additional larger slide came in, catching several vehicles in its path The force of this slide pushed a delivery van across the west bound lanes into the east bound lanes along with the permanent center median rail Mud was running over the hood of the van and debris rose up to the driver's side window. A rock falling from the side of the mountain struck the van, blowing a hole through the side of the van about 18 inches in diameter Fearing the imminent danger of additional rock and mudslides, officials gave the order to evacuate the area. Preparing to leave, Mr Ball saw a man trapped inside the delivery van He jumped over the median barrier and waded through the flowing mud and rock to the van Finding the driver's door was jammed, Mr Ball pulled the trapped man through the driver's window carrying him through the slide debris to safety. His actions prevented the man from further injury or death

John Banister

Lieutenant

California Highway Patrol

8/29/2011

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 29, 2011, at approximately 7:39 a.m , several California Highway Patrol officers, including Lieutenant John Banister, were in a high speed pursuit of a stolen vehicle when the driver lost control while negotiating a curve and struck a power pole. The live power lines fell onto the vehicle and the surrounding ground, igniting a brush fire After the collision, two of the vehicle's occupants jumped out and were immediately taken into custody. The female driver sustained a major head wound and was unconscious in the vehicle Lieutenant Banister and other CHP officers tried, but were unable to extinguish the rapidly growing brush fire. Concerned about the driver, Officer Banister jumped over the live, arcing power lines, and single-handedly extinguished the fire just as the vehic e began to catch on fire

PG&E crews arrived on the scene, deactivated the power lines and then CAL FIRE personnel extricated the woman and she was transported to the hospita

Alvin Banta

Correctional Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

1/6/1962

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 6, Correctional Officer Alvin E. Banta charged unarmed into the midst of a disturbance in a day room at the Correctional Training Facility, Soledad. Three inmates were stabbed, one fatally. Officer Banta, without hesitation or assistance, moved into the day room, separated the attackers from the victims and disbursed the inmates to prevent further rioting. Officer Banta then gave his immediate attention to the victims. The action on Officer Banta's part was credited with saving many more people from being injured or possible killed.

Wesley R. Barnes

Officer

California Highway Patrol

6/26/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 3:42 a.m. on June 26, 2020, Officer Wesley Barnes attempted to perform a traffic enforcement stop on a vehicle traveling at 86 miles per hour in a 65-miles per hour speed zone. The vehicle failed to yield to the officer's lights and siren, resulting in a high-speed pursuit that reached speeds of 105 miles per hour. Fortunately, it was a relatively traffic-less freeway at that hour. Carrying two other passengers, the driver lost control of the vehicle, crashing into a large tree on the right side of the highway. The vehicle's impact prompted it to roll over and rest on the passenger's side where it instantly erupted into flames. Officer Barnes and Officer Gallemore responded to the occupants yelling for help, with Officer Gallemore breaking the driver's side window and the two officers removing two of the occupants from the vehicle in flames. The two occupants confirmed a third passenger was still in the vehicle. Officer Barnes instantly climbed into the smoke-filled vehicle headfirst. He found an unconscious passenger, with their legs pinned due to the crash. Using only a pocket knife, Officer Barnes cut the passenger's restraint and then pulled on their torso and arms as the flames continued to move toward the passenger compartment. The passenger's sweatshirt slipped off, causing Officer Barnes to lose his grip, while also becoming overwhelmed by the smoke. As Officer Barnes exited the vehicle, Officer Gallemore entered the vehicle headfirst and grabbed onto the passenger's arms. He continued to pull until the passenger's legs were freed from the wreckage. Officer Gallemore felt the passenger slip free and called Officer Barnes to help him remove the passenger from the burning vehicle. Together, both officers lifted the passenger from the vehicle before the flames entered the passenger compartment. The unconscious passenger was carried to the shoulder lane where he began breathing again. As the officers reached the shoulder lane, the flames overtook the passenger compartment where the unconscious passenger was removed from. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Barnes went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Wesley Barnes.

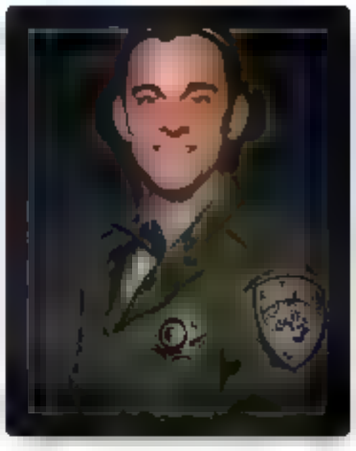
Michael Basile

Officer

California Highway Patrol

6/18/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)



On June 18, 2017, at approximately 2 51 p m , Golden Gate Communications Center broadcasted a crash involving a box truck, which had crashed into a light pole and tree California Highway Patrol Officer Michael Basile arrived on scene and found several occupants trapped inside the box truck with the driver and passenger doors jammed shut Additionally, dry foliage, a tree, and the truck's tires were all on fire. California Highway Patrol Officer Nhan Mai and California Highway Patrol Sergeant Thomas Byington also arrived on scene and immediately began to assist with the situation Sergeant Byington ran to assist Officer Basile, while Officer Mai retrieved a fire extinguisher from the patrol vehicle. Officer Mai attempted to put out the fire, but the fire extinguisher malfunctioned Sergeant Byington advised the Golden Gate Communications Center that the truck was on fire and requested all available units to respond with fire extinguishers to the scene Officer Mai rolled down the driver side window so the driver could climb out and walk away from the burning truck to safety. Officer Mai and Officer Basile attempted to enter the truck through the passenger side door to rescue the other passengers, but they were unable to pull the door open Sergeant Byington assisted the officers and used his size and strength to help force open the passenger door The cab was now full of smoke and visibility was low Inside, one passenger was bleeding and pinned against the dash Officer Basile reached into the cab and with the help of Sergeant Byington, freed the passenger and dragged him to safety. Officer Mai observed the front seat passenger reaching out for help but was unable to pull the passenger out on his own Officer Basile returned to the truck to assist Officer Mai, and together, they were able to pull the passenger out to safety. Officer Mai then climbed into the truck and found another passenger unconscious, slumped over the center console, and trapped between the driver and passenger front seats Officer Mai pushed the seat with his legs while Sergeant Byington and Officer Basile pulled on the seat from the outside They were able to free the passenger and drag her to safety Once again, Officer Mai entered the burning truck and found another passenger on the floorboard behind the driver's seat The passenger was unable to move his leg, which was bleeding and pinned by various objects Officer Mai began pushing the furniture and other items away to try and free the passenger Officer Basile also entered the truck to help. The officers were able to pull the passenger out through the passenger side door and drag him to safety. All the passengers were successfully removed from the burning truck and received medical treatment With no regard for his own safety, Officer Basile went above and beyond the call of duty The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Michael Basile.

Zach Basnett

Correctional Sergeant

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

5/24/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 24, 2017, at 10 20 a m , in the Pelican Bay State Prison outdoor exercise yard, with approximately three hundred inmates, a one-on-one fight started When correctional officers responded to the fight to stop the incident, approximately 130 inmates began rushing and attacking the officers. Sergeant Zach Basnett ran into the riot and utilized force to stop the attack The force did not have the desired effect. As the inmates continued their attack, Sergeant Basnett witnessed one inmate swinging a state-issued baton Fearing the inmate may continue to batter him or other staff, Sergeant Basnett sprayed the inmate with pepper spray and then reached out and grabbed the baton, yanking it from the inmate's grasp. Sergeant Basnett then collapsed the baton and retained it in his possession as he regrouped with other responding officers. With no regard for his own safety, Sergeant Basnett's heroic act saved the lives of fellow officers and inmates in the face of a large prison fight The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctional Sergeant Zach Basnett

Edward Bass, Jr.

Patton State Hospital Police Officer

Department of Mental Health

3/19/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 19, 2009, Patton State Hospital Police Officer Edward Dale Bass, Jr. was off duty and driving home from work on State Route 330, in the Twin Peaks area of San Bernardino County. During his commute, he came upon a car accident in the middle of the road. As Officer Bass approached the car in an attempt to render aid, he was met by a distraught man holding a handgun inside the car with a two year old child. Upon seeing this, Officer Bass took cover, pulled out his own gun, and began giving the man commands to drop his gun. Officer Bass was able to convince the man to drop his gun, but the man said he had more guns inside the car with him and was refusing to surrender. He repeatedly asked Officer Bass to shoot him. Officer Bass instructed a passerby to call 911, continued to keep the man at gun point, and kept citizens and medical responders at a safe distance until back-up assistance could arrive. Once CHP Officers arrived and after a short stand-off, Officer Bass and the CHP took the man into custody. It was later learned that the man had kidnapped his wife and two children, with the intent to kill them all in the mountains off of State Route 330. Just prior to Officer Bass arriving at the crash scene, the man had shot at his wife who ran from the car with her older son and hid in the woods. She had not been able to rescue her youngest child who was still in the car when the man lost control and crashed. After the man was taken into custody, Officers discovered two more handguns, a rifle and several rounds of ammunition in the car. The actions of Officer Bass, without regard for his personal safety, prevented what could have been a disastrous situation resulting in possible injury or loss of lives

Adam Battle

Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/28/1996

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 2:46 a m , a tractor/trailer collided with another tractor/trailer which had slowed down due to a previous traffic collision at Interstate 10 and Holt Boulevard involving a tractor/trailer and two passenger vehicles The driver had dozed off, unaware of the slow moving traffic and had not taken any evasive action to prevent an accident His vehicle then veered to the left into the number two and three lanes The tractor/trailer, still out of control, struck five passenger vehicles and passed two tractor/trailers colliding with the rear trailer of a set of double trailers in the number four lane The tractor burst into flames His legs were trapped by the dashboard and engine components which collapsed upon impact. Officers on the scene broadcasted the collision into the Inland Communications Center and went to the aid of the drivers in the passenger cars unaware the driver of the burning tractor was still inside Officers Heller, Avila, Finn and Battle responded to the scene and upon arrival heard the trapped driver's cries for help and saw the flames rapidly spreading from the tractor to the trailer, as well as to the trailer it had struck The officers attempted to open the driver's side door to free the driver but the severity of the collision left the door twisted and jammed closed The officer tried to reassure the driver as they reached into the burning truck, gasping the driver's shoulders and arms in an attempt to pull him free. As Officers Finn and Battle attempted to free the driver, Officers Heller and Avila doused the trapped driver with fire extinguishers and attempted to pull the jammed door open. The flames were spreading rapidly through the cab of the truck to the sleeper berth and upholstery. The driver was still conscious and calling for help The entire right side of the tractor, its trailer, and the trailer it had struck were on fire The tractor's fuel tank had ruptured and gasoline was rushing down the traffic lanes towards the other vehicles The officers continued their efforts to free the trapped driver as the flames spread All four officers remained with the driver, still trying to free him and extinguish the flames After depleting several fire extinguishers and unable to pry the tractor door open, they were forced to move to a place of safety due to the intensity of the fire At this point, the tractor and trailer were fully engulfed, with flames reaching 30 to 40 feet in the air Unfortunately, the driver could not be saved and sustained fatal injuries from the collision and fire

Albert Bayer

Aeronautics Board Chairman

Aeronautics Board

11/25/1967

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the afternoon of November 25, 1967, Albert W Bayer performed an extraordinary act of heroism, at great risk to his own safety and life, in saving the life of another person A young man became marooned on a narrow rock ledge near Havasu Palms and was unable to descend The ledge, approximate y two feet wide, was completely surrounded by perpendicular cliffs. Becoming aware of the boy's dangerous situation, and realizing that immediate rescue was imperative because of the unlikelihood of the boy surviving the night, San Bernardino County Sheriff's Office personne requested Mr Bayer who had flown to the area in his helicopter, to attempt the rescue In the increasing darkness and after severa unsuccessful attempts, Mr Bayer finally succeeded in placing the tips of the helicopter's skids on the edge A though aware of the possibility of a fatal shift in the aircraft's center of gravity, he instructed the boy to jump aboard. Only great skill and total disregard for his own safety enabled Mr Bayer to maintain contro and prevent serious injury to himself and his passenger whi e consummating the rescue. The Medal of Valor was presented to Albert W. Bayer for an act of heroism extending far above and beyond the call of duty or service

Virginia Bayles

Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/9/2000

Special Service Award (Silver)

California Highway Patrol Officer Virginia Bay es, on September 9, 2000, performed an act of heroism at risk to her personal safety when she rescued an intoxicated driver from his burning vehicle At approximately 6 30 p m , on September 9, 2000, Officer Virginia Bay es, who was off duty, was eastbound on Rising Road (a rural road in southern Sacramento County), when she observed a black 1986 BMW in a shallow ditch of dry grass and brush Officer Bayles stopped to investigate and to render assistance. Upon approaching the vehicle, Officer Bayles observed dry grass and brush on fire underneath the rear of the vehic e She also observed a male sitting in the driver's seat. He appeared to be intoxicated Officer Bayles began to shout and bang on the passenger door window in an attempt to rouse the driver As the fire intensified, Officer Bayles managed to force open the right front passenger door The driver resisted Officer Bayles' attempts to remove him from the vehicle After three or four attempts, Officer Bayles finally managed to pull the driver out of the vehicle. The driver resisted leaving the area He stated he had a shove in the trunk of the car and that he could put out the fire Officer Bayles indicated it was too late for that and they needed to get help She began to ye for he p He attempted to return to his vehicle to get the shovel and put out the fire Officer Bayles grabbed his arm and led him over to her vehicle When they got to her vehicle, she started honking the horn and continued to yell for help Officer Bayles then proceeded to a nearby residence and requested the owner call 911, requesting the fire department She also stated the Sheriff or CHP was needed because the driver appeared to be intoxicated The driver had suffered no injuries and was later arrested at the scene for driving under the influence His blood alcoho eve was 23 The fire comp ete y engulfed the vehicle

Mark T. Beathard

Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/1/2000

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Mark T. Beathard performed an extraordinary act of heroism at risk to his personal safety while on duty at the scene of a traffic collision. Officer Beathard observed a vehicle speeding toward him and two citizens. He pushed the two citizens out of harm's way and was subsequently struck by the vehicle driven by an intoxicated driver. On March 1, 2000, Officer Beathard was dispatched to a non-injury collision involving two vehicles on Interstate 805 South at the transition to Interstate 15 South. The vehicles had been moved to the right shoulder near the gore point of the transition to facilitate traffic. Officer Beathard's motorcycle was parked at the end of the gore point area and approximately nine feet to the west of the damaged vehicles. He was standing with two citizens from one of the vehicles, which had been involved in the collision. Cognizant of the danger from passing vehicles, Officer Beathard alerted the two citizens not to turn their backs to the traffic. Minutes later, Officer Beathard noticed a Lincoln Town Car veering suddenly from the I-805 South traffic lanes onto the gore point. As the vehicle continued south towards Officer Beathard and the two citizens, Officer Beathard yelled "Watch Out" and pushed them out of the way. The Lincoln Town Car sideswiped the left side of the CHP motorcycle and struck Officer Beathard and one of the citizens. Officer Beathard was thrown onto the hood of the Lincoln Town Car and suffered broken bones to both legs. The citizen was fortunate, and was only hit in the elbow by the errant car after being pushed by Officer Beathard. The driver of the Lincoln Town Car subsequently fled the scene and was arrested two days after the accident.

Officer Beathard perceived an imminent danger to those standing on the freeway shoulder and performed an unselfish act of bravery, risking his own life, to protect and preserve the lives of others.

Jack Bedwell

Fish and Game Law Enforcement Officer

Department of Fish and Wildlife

10/1/1961

Special Service Award (Silver)

In October 1961, Fish and Game Employee Jack E Bedwell averted the derailment of a high speed passenger train near Mecca Beach, Salton Sea Park, by the quick removal of steel pipes on the roadbed

Christopher Beehner

State Park Peace Officer

Department of Parks and Recreation

11/9/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of November 9, 2018, State Park Peace Officer Christopher Beehner was called in to respond to the Camp Fire in Butte County. Working a 16-hour day, Officer Beehner he ped evacuate more than 300 homes in Paradise, Magalia and Concow while the fire raged After helping evacuate Paradise and Concow, Officer Beehner was assigned, along with Officer Zackery Chambers, to help evacuate Magalia. When they got to Magalia, they met a group of Butte County sheriff deputies completing evacuations. Shortly after the two officers arrived, the intense fire threatened to cut off all of the routes out of Magalia All the officers, except Officer Chambers and Officer Beehner, evacuated the area. The two officers stayed in Magalia to evacuate as many people as they could, in spite of the risk of being trapped by the fire While rescuing peop e in Maga ia, Officer Beehner was continuously confronted with flames and downed trees He faced these dangerous challenges and found ways to safe y prevent the residents and himself from being trapped by the fire Although well aware of the number of lives already lost to the fire, Officer Beehner was determined and tireless in his efforts to save as many lives as he could With no regard for his own safety, Officer Beehner went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Parks and Recreation State Park Peace Officer Christopher Beehner.

Cari L. Beetham

Master Sergeant, Chief of Instruction, Military Police

California Military Department

6/30/2008

Special Service Award (Silver)

On June 30, 2008, at approximately 7 30 am, in overcast, foggy conditions, Master Sergeant Cari Beetham and Staff Sergeant Christopher Davis were traveling north on Highway 1 As they approached the Camp San Luis Obispo overpass, they witnessed a small sedan lose control, strike the center barrier, and then swerve back across the highway and over the side of the overpass embankment The driver's side of the vehicle collided into a tree which stopped the sedan at a 45 degree angle, approximate y 30 meters above Chorro Creek Master Sergeant Beetham and Staff Sergeant Davis immediately pulled over and rushed to the scene of the accident. Without hesitation, and knowing the sedan was unstable and could possibly slide down the embankment, Staff Sergeant Davis entered the car from the passenger's side and assessed the woman's vital signs The woman was unconscious. Her left arm was pinned between the tree and the driver's side door, her head and neck were hyper-extended, and her airway was closed off due to the caved in roof on the driver's side For over 20 minutes, Staff Sergeant Davis provided life saving aid, by propping her head up to re-open her airway As the woman went in and out of consciousness, Staff Sergeant Davis treated the woman for shock and continued to reassure her to prevent panic and further injury Meanwhile, Master Sergeant Beetham scrambled to find materials to brace the tires in order to prevent the precariously positioned sedan from rolling down the embankment. Master Sergeant Beetham then called 911 emergency services and secured the accident scene by directing and controlling traffic After fire rescue arrived, Master Sergeant Beetham assisted in moving the sedan and releasing the woman's arm. Staff Sergeant Davis continued to hold the woman's head up while rescue personnel worked from the rear passenger side to remove the woman The actions of Master Sergeant Beetham and Staff Sergeant Davis, without regard for their own safety, saved the woman's life

Eric Beffa

Detective

Department of Justice

4/12/2012

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On April 12, 2012, responding to reports of shoots fired and officers down, Detective Eric Beffa, along with ten other officers of the Modesto police department, arrived on scene to find Stanislaus County Sheriff's Deputy Bob Paris and civilian locksmith Glendon Engert lying unconscious outside the front door leading to the suspect's apartment front door Armed with an arsenal, the suspect had barricaded himself inside his apartment and exchanging fire with a second deputy, Deputy Mike Glinskas, who was pinned down and had issued the call for help Placing ballistic shields across the front passenger window of a Modesto police car, a group of officers took cover on the driver's side and used the vehicle as mobile cover to advance on the apartment while the remaining officers deployed a flash bang diversionary device Their coordinated efforts were successful in that they were able to extract Glinskas and escort him to safety and medical attention They were also able to recover Paris and Engert, both of whom had unfortunately been mortally wounded

After an eleven hour standoff, the suspect took his own life. The actions of Detective Beffa and his fellow officers, prevented the deadly standoff from escalating further and thereby threatening more lives

Jose A. Benitez

Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/2/2023

Special Act Award (Gold)

On Tuesday, May 2, 2023, at approximately 1 45 p.m., a female driver was traveling home southbound on Wa.kena Avenue, outside of Corcoran, when she began to feel dizzy. She thought the feeling would pass but it didn't, and suddenly she lost consciousness behind the wheel. On-duty Officer Jose Benitez noticed the driver's smal b ue vehic.e beginning to weave slightly, but soon the weaving became more pronounced As the driver approached an intersection, her vehicle suddenly veered to the left off the road, colliding with a power pole at approximately 55 miles per hour The impact caused her vehicle to spin 360 degrees before s amming into an adjacent canal where the vehicle began to fill with water Recognizing the ife-threatening and dangerous situation, Officer Benitez immediately notified dispatch and requested emergency response The vehicle was most y submerged in the cana , and Officer Benitez could only see the rear window and taillights Equipped with a crowbar, Officer Benitez climbed down onto the rear hatch of the vehicle and used the crowbar to smash open the right passenger window He was then ab e to see the driver unconscious with her face down in the water He ca ed out to her several times, and eventually, she regained consciousness and began frantically screaming to Officer Benitez for help. He could see she was almost completely submerged, holding her head back to keep her mouth out of the water Officer Benitez told the driver to remain calm and try not to move His greatest fear at this point was the vehicle shifting and possibly becoming submerged even further He asked if there were any other occupants, and she stated she was the only person Officer Benitez climbed back up onto the bank and obtained a rope from an onlooker, tied it around his waist and told the bystanders to pu him back if he went under. Then, without hesitation or regard for his own safety, he fully entered the canal where he observed the driver's window had been shattered during the initial impact. With the depth of the cold water approximate y at his sho ders, he reached the driver's door and confirmed her legs were not trapped. He instructed her to release her seatbelt At that point, he grabbed underneath her arms and pulled her out of the window before assisting her to the bank of the cana where bystanders helped her onto dry land Once on and, Officer Benitez learned the driver was five months pregnant Officer Benitez further coordinated emergency response units and waited with the driver Luckily, she suffered only minor injuries and was transported to a local hospital for treatment The risks of Officer Benitez being swept under by the current of the canal or being trapped underneath the vehicle as he extricated the driver were very real and imminent possibi ities Officer Benitez displayed exceptional courage and unwavering devotion to duty Fortunately, Officer Benitez was uninjured in the rescue. The driver described him as her "angel de la guarda," which is Spanish for guardian ange The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Meda of Valor to California Highway Patrol, Officer Jose Benitez for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Jerry L. Bennette

Lifeguard

Department of Parks and Recreation

1/26/1969

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 26, 1969, Life Guard Supervisor Knut B Skjonberg and Lifeguards Eric V Emery and Jerry L. Bennette responded to cries from a young man who had entered the rain swollen Santa Ana River to ride an inner tube and was quickly being carried out to sea. Dubbed the "worst storm in over thirty years", the river was running bank to bank with an accumulation of mud, debris, trees, rattlesnakes and even spiders, all trapped in the swirling waters The three men, noting the peril confronting the screaming, panic stricken youth, unhesitatingly forged their way through the churning mass of murky water Clawing their way over logs and swimming wherever possible, the three reached the youth and pulled, tugged, and towed him to safety. Due to the extremely polluted water and the cuts and bruises incurred during the rescue, all had to be medically treated and inoculated against disease.

Mark Bentley

Culinary Arts Vocational Instructor

California Youth Authority

4/19/1992

Special Service Award (Silver)

At approximately 12 30 p m Culinary Arts Vocational Instructor Mark Bentley witnessed a man struggling in Rancho Seco Lake He immediately called 911 requesting an ambulance Instead of waiting for the ambulance he began administering mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and felt for the victims pulse Instructor Bentley was able to restore a pulse to the victim, but stopped CPR when the victim aspirated He then rolled the victim on his side and made every effort to clear the airway. He noticed the airway was a major problem because the victim was breathing at about 14 breaths per minute, very labored The victim was unconscious and did not respond to pain stimuli of knuckling the sternum When the first park ranger arrived, Instructor Bentley ordered him to get Life Flight airborne The park ranger had oxygen which Instructor Bentley administered by way of a mask When the Herald fire rescue crew arrived, Instructor Bentley explained the issue of an airway problem and requested oral airway. When Life Flight arrived, Instructor Bentley gave a nurse the recap of events stressing the airway prob em the victim was having. The victim was transported to UC Medical Center by he icopter, and since, the victim has fully recovered from his ordeal

Kevin H. Berg

Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/12/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 12, 2004, California Highway Patrol Officer Kevin H. Berg, performed an act of heroism at great risk to his personal safety when he rescued a woman trapped inside her vehicle while being attacked by a dog. At approximately 7:45 p.m., off-duty Officer Berg arrived at the Safeway grocery store in Fort Bragg with his wife to shop for groceries. While standing outside the grocery store Officer Berg heard an unusual screaming sound coming from within a car parked in the parking lot. The noise from the car continued as the car's horn sounded in a continuous, unusual manner. Officer Berg moved toward the car and saw the victim sprawled on the driver's floorboard and front seat with her right arm clutched in the jaws of a dog. He also observed a female occupant in the right front passenger seat and safely removed her from the car. The victim's arm was badly mutilated and she appeared to be in shock and unable to continue resisting the dog's attack. Officer Berg yelled at a Safeway employee to call 911 as he entered the vehicle through the rear hatch. He made a couple of unsuccessful attempts to distract the dog before grabbing hold of the dog's leash and pulling the dog off of the victim. Officer Berg was able to hold the dog against the rear seat of the vehicle until Fort Bragg Police Officers arrived and rendered aid to the victim and Officer Berg. Suddenly, the dog turned and began to leap over the rear seat toward Officer Berg. A Fort Bragg police officer pepper sprayed the dog and utilized an electrical tazer to stop the attack and allow Officer Berg time to exit the vehicle. The victim was stabilized at Fort Bragg's Coast Hospital and then airlifted to Stanford Medical Center where doctors were successful in saving her severely mutilated right arm.

Kent Bergquist

Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

2/17/1986

Special Service Award (Silver)

On February 17, 1986, in the midst of a violent mountain rainstorm, a major landslide covered the east and westbound lanes of Interstate 80 near Floriston above the Truckee River. A second landslide swept a car with a family of five inside, 200 feet down a steep embankment. The three teenaged sons were able to make their way out of the crushed vehicle and up to the highway but the parents could not climb the steep hillside. In the heavy rain and strong wind, Sergeant Bergquist maneuvered his way through the slide area, despite the imminent danger of more earth movement. Assisted by the husband and Caltrans employee Gregory McKurtis, they were able to push and carry the exhausted woman up to the roadway. Less than 30 minutes before a third and still larger rock slide came down just 100 feet east of where the couple had been stranded.

Michael Bernardin

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/23/1988

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 23, 1988, at approximately 8 52 p m , Officer Bernardin encountered a major injury accident involving an on-duty Seal Beach Police Department Officer. At the time of his arrival, the entire rear portion of the vehicle was consumed by fire and flames were shooting from underneath the vehicle toward the passenger door In the face of eminent danger from an exploding gas tank, Officer Bernardin, without regard to his personal safety, approached the burning vehicle and attempted to extinguish the fire He immediately noticed the unconscious driver slumped to the right of the driver's seat. After emptying his fire extinguisher, Officer Bernardin made numerous attempts to reach the injured officer. On finding the driver's door inaccessible, Officer Bernardin was able to reach the unconscious driver through the left side window, but was unable to remove him. By this time, the heat was intense and the fire was entering the vehicle and spreading rapidly. Officer Bernardin ran to the open right door, partially entered the burning vehicle, grabbed the injured man's belt and attempted to pull him from the vehicle when the victim became tangled in the seat belt. The fire had now entered the front compartment and was becoming more dangerous with every passing moment. With people at the scene yelling at the officer and two other individuals to leave before the vehicle exploded, they managed to cut the seat belt and pull the officer to safety just moments before the vehicle was fully engulfed in flames.

Michael Berry

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/27/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 6:43 a.m. on August 27, 2020, a private civilian airplane was departing from Benton Airpark and crashed just after take-off. California Highway Patrol Lieutenant Michael Berry, from the Redding Area, was visiting with some of the Air Ops crew members. It was Sergeant Jeff Edgerton who noticed from his office that a private airplane was attempting to takeoff at an unusual altitude that was not consistent with sustained flight. Sergeant Edgerton loudly announced to everyone in the office that a plane was about to crash. The airplane departed the runway complex, crossed over Placer Street, and crashed into a steep, brush filled ravine. Lieutenant Berry entered his patrol vehicle and arrived on scene within approximately 30 seconds, notified the CHP Redding Communications Center of the crash, and requested multiple ambulances. Lieutenant Berry led the responding Air Ops personnel down the steep embankment to the burning crash site. Lieutenant Berry, and other officers arrived at the burning crash site and saw the first victim on the ground nearly 10 feet away from the burning fuselage. While circling the aircraft, they came upon a second victim who was thrown approximately 20 feet from the burning aircraft. Officer Eric Pohrman utilized a patrol vehicle fire extinguisher to put out the fire on and around the second victim. Lieutenant Berry, Officer Jeffery Hatcher, and Officer Erik Mallory picked up the second victim and moved them further away from the fully engulfed fuselage. The aircraft's onboard oxygen tank had caught fire and caused a large secondary explosion. Officer Pohrman and Officer Steve Weyand arrived with additional fire extinguishers, and battled the fire on and around the first victim. Sergeant Edgerton, Officer Pohrman, and Officer Hatcher were able to pull the first victim away from the burning aircraft and vegetation. Lieutenant Berry coordinated with Sergeant Edgerton to perform a systematic grid search of the area to locate any additional victims. Lieutenant Berry CHP personnel carried the injured victims up the steep embankment to awaiting ambulances. The victims were transported to Mercy Medical Center for treatment of several life-threatening injuries. With no regard for his own safety, Lieutenant Berry went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Lieutenant Michael Berry.

Jonathan B. Bevan

Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor

Department of Transportation

1/20/2004

Special Service Award (Silver)

On January 20, 2004, California Department of Transportation employees Jonathan B. Bevan, Steve Carroll, Keith A Laub and Henry Harden performed acts of heroism at risk to their personal safety when they prevented an occupied vehicle from plummeting over a snowy mountain cliff. At 2:10 P M , an SUV hit a patch of icy roadway south of Big Bear on State Highway 38 and spun off the highway near Onyx Summit. The vehicle landed on its side and was perched precariously against a tree on a slope - about 800 feet above the canyon with the engine still running, the tires still spinning, and the driver helplessly trapped inside A retired Los Angeles police detective witnessed the accident and flagged down a Caltrans vehicle driven by Henry Harden With the SUV slowly slipping down the mountainside, Mr. Harden immediately radioed for help Within minutes a Caltrans snowplow driven by Keith Laub arrived Soon thereafter, Jonathan Bevan and Steve Carroll arrived on the scene Jonathan Bevan and Steve Carroll provided the safety zone for Mr Harden and Mr Laub to work at securing the overturned vehicle to keep it from plummeting into the canyon The situation was very dangerous; another vehicle lost control on the icy road and crashed within 15 feet of the snowplows Mr. Bevan and Mr Carroll marked off the area with flares and began a flagging operation to control traffic and ensure that emergency vehicles could gain access They moved onlookers to a safe area and, to give vehicles more traction, applied cinders to the roadway. Meanwhile, at 8500 feet, with snow falling, Mr Laub took a chain from the snowplow, climbed down the dangerously steep and icy slope, attached the chain to the SUV's axle and secured the other end to one of the Caltrans snowplows Mr Harden then climbed down the steep, icy incline, attached another chain to the SUV and secured the other end to a second snowplow To stabilize the SUV, the snowplows were then positioned to draw the chains into a taut "V" Understandably, the SUV's driver was visibly relieved. They monitored the vehicle and the driver until rescue crews arrived Emergency personnel then pried the door open and carried the driver to safety, who was taken to a nearby hospital for evaluation and released the same day Without a thought to their own personal safety, Mr Bevan, Mr. Carroll, Mr Harden and Mr. Laub assisted in the rescue effort that saved the driver's life

Jake Bibby

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

4/11/2022

Special Service Award (Silver)

On April 11, 2022, around 10 00 a.m., Coulterville Station Engine 4281 was dispatched to a priority one medical aid While enroute, rain was moderate to heavy with clouds sitting deep in the canyons Passing through the Scotch Gulch area, Fire Captain Jake Bibby noticed a damaged reflector on the side of the road. He asked his firefighter to look over the cliff as they drove through the canyon to see if there was a vehicle over the side Due to very poor visibility the firefighter did not see anything While returning to the station after the call, Captain Bibby parked in the closest turnout and walked the site where he had previously seen the damaged reflector. Even through poor visibility, Captain Bibby was able to see a vehicle approximately 500 feet over the cliff. Captain Bibby descended the steep terrain and found a 51-year-old father and his 11-year-old son who were coming home from a camping trip when they accidentally drove off the cliff. Both father and son were trapped inside the vehicle and needed immediate medical attention due to their injuries. Captain Bibby started first aid after contacting the Mariposa Emergency Command Center to request emergency assistance including a helicopter extraction However, due to the weather conditions, poor visibility, and safety concerns the helicopter extraction was cancelled With assistance from several emergency response personnel, both father and son were eventually extracted using low angle rope rescue operational equipment and transported to nearby hospitals by ambulance In account of location, weather, injuries, and no cellphone service, this could have been a fatal accident, however, Captain Bibby's situational awareness is the reason both father and son were found and rescued. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Jake Bibby for his act of heroism extending above and beyond the normal call of duty

William Bishop

State Park Ranger

Department of Parks and Recreation

8/25/1962

Special Service Award (Silver)

On August 25, 1962, Fort Ross Ranger William Bishop and Curator John McKenzie and another rescuer launched a 16 foot outboard boat in the heavy seas to rescue crew members of the sailing yacht "Holiday" when a huge wave swept the sailing vessel. The boat's engine was disabled, the vessel was taking on water and one crewman was washed overboard With their radio gone, the three remaining members built a fire on the deck Ranger Bishop, Curator McKenzie and the other rescuer launched the outboard boat and pulled the 80 foot yacht to deep water despite the imminent danger of breaking up on the rocky coast. All but the crewman swept to sea were saved

Michael Blake

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

8/9/2007

Special Service Award (Silver)

At approximately 12 00 p m , on August 9, 2007, the Pine Grove Maintenance crew was working on westbound Highway 88 at Buckhorn Ridge Road near Ione when a Mule Creek State Prison inmate bus, towing a trailer, passed their location As the bus drove down the hill, a wheel came off the trailer, causing sparks to ignite the grass next to the roadway. A grassfire quickly ensued burning through the meadow and into the trees Seeing the blaze, Lead Worker Dave McDaniel sent Michael Blake in his grader to the west flank of the fire where he proceeded to cut a fire line from the highway up into the trees Meanwhile Leonard Marsh, Kyle Gaspard and John Kearns, using a narrow private drive, drove their large water tanker in from the east With Kyle Gaspard manning the water hose, they kept the east flank of the fire from reaching two homes located within the path of the fire. Even after the arrival of the Cal Fire units, these employees continued to support the fire trucks with water until the fire was contained Dave McDaniel and Scot McKinney set up traffic control and managed to keep the road open to traffic, while directing emergency vehicles to the fire. Cal Fire dispatched 6 engines, 2 hand crews, 1 dozer and 2 helicopters to handle this fire The immediate actions taken by the maintenance crew prevented the fire from reaching catastrophic levels and saved at least two homes from possible destruction. Cal Fire commended the crew for their quick response

Scott Bligh

Deputy

Other

8/21/2010

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

The Sheriff's Aerial Support to Regional Enforcement Agencies (ASTREA) Copters 10 and 12 were en route to the Monte Fire, in an unincorporated area of Lakeside. The Sheriff's Communication Center advised the patrol aircraft that two rock climbers, Meg Rippy and Andre Doria, were stranded on the side of a cliff, with a fast moving fire approaching them. Deputy Scott Bligh and Deputy Gary Kneeshaw immediately lifted off in a helicopter from base to assist in rescuing the climbers. With clearance from Cal Fire to fly at a low level, the deputies were guided by Deputy Walden (Copter 10) to the place where he had located Rippy and Doria. The crew rescued Rippy, but had to abort its rescue of Doria because of a steep drop off and winds. Deputy Kneeshaw stayed behind with Doria until the helicopter could return. Deputy Bligh returned and Deputy Kneeshaw, loading Doria into the front seat, realized that the flames were only 10 feet from the tail rotor and needed to act quickly. Deputy Kneeshaw immediately climbed onto the right skid and yelled to Deputy Bligh to lift off. Deputy Bligh flew the helicopter through and eventually out of the smoke and down to the valley floor with Deputy Kneeshaw standing unsecured on the skid for the entire flight. The entire rescue operation took only five minutes.

Lynne Blum

Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

8/22/2002

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Sergeant Lynne Blum, and Officers Andrey English and Troy King, on August 22, 2002, performed acts of heroism at risk to their personal safety by rescuing a victim from a burning vehicle. At approximately 3 17 a m , Sergeant Blum, and Officers English and King, were working routine patrol in West Los Angeles, when they responded to a call for assistance at the scene of a traffic collision. The driver, Mr. Juan Herrera, was trapped inside his burning pick-up, which was wedged against the center divider wall The driver, who was initially unconscious, awoke disoriented and started to panic as the fire began to enter through the fire wall around his feet The Fire Department had not yet arrived on the scene. Sergeant Blum and Officers English and King decided any further delay in responding to this situation would likely result in the oss of the driver's life. The officers were unable to extricate the driver from the passenger side and retreated from the pick-up truck The driver was still incoherent but becoming more aware he was starting to catch fire He was resisting efforts by the officers to free him. Sergeant Blum and Officers English and King, with flames raging around them from the engine compartment and the melting dashboard, continued to work feverishly and were able to pull the driver to safety from the burning pick-up truck, just as the passenger compartment became fully engulfed The driver who sustained major injuries was transported to a local hospita

Steven W. Blythe

Firefighter I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

5/22/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 22, 2008, the crew on Engine 1675 was assigned to Division "O" on the Summit fire, which was burning in Santa Clara and Santa Cruz Counties. At approximately 9:45 am, the crew was requested to go to a residence on Dove Lane to search for a previously evacuated resident who was last seen running back up his driveway toward his residence. Despite great personal risk, the crew drove to the residence. The fire was "crowning" and burning intensely in the heavy vegetation on both sides of the access road, and the winds were blowing at 40 to 50 miles per hour. When the crew arrived at the residence driveway, the flames were so intense that they could not drive any further, so they backed up to a safe area and positioned the engine for a quick evacuation. Captain Gibble instructed Firefighter Efflandt to stay with the engine to act as a lookout for increased fire behavior and other hazards while he and Firefighters Hollowell and Blythe headed up the driveway on foot to search for the missing resident. Exposed to intense heat and smoke from the burning residence and with nearby propane tanks venting and blowing up in ground-shaking explosions, the crew retreated from the residence only after a thorough search of the area and repeated attempts to garner a response from the resident failed. It was later determined that the resident had fled to safety. The crew from Engine 1675 is to be commended for their dedication to duty and service despite the great danger to their personal safety. The State of California takes great pride in presenting Fire Captain Rick Lee Gibble, and Firefighters Steven W. Blythe, Kyle Efflandt, and Ryan Hollowell, these Gold Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

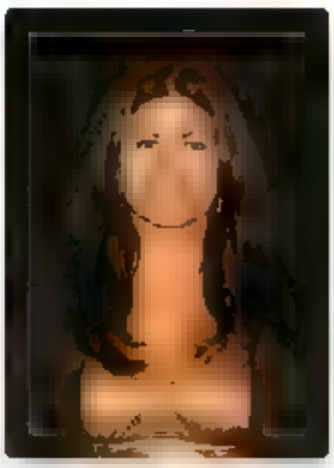
Teodora "Dora" Bonilla

Psychiatric Technician

Department of Developmental Services

2/27/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)



On February 27, 2010, Teodora "Dora" Bonilla and her daughter were driving through a fierce rain and wind storm on the busy Corona Expressway, when Ms. Bonilla saw a body lying in the middle of the freeway. She abruptly changed lanes and applied her brakes to avoid hitting the victim, causing the vehicle behind her to collide with her car. Ms. Bonilla exited her vehicle, alerting the person in the vehicle behind her to block the oncoming traffic. Ms. Bonilla was the first person on the scene of an accident between a van and a car and it was apparent that the woman had been ejected from her car. Despite the danger of being in the middle of a busy freeway during a strong storm where visibility was low, Ms. Bonilla calmly assessed the woman's condition. The woman had lacerations to her face, was shaking, and appeared to be in shock. Ms. Bonilla noted that the woman was throwing up blood so she immediately turned her onto her side to prevent suffocation. Two county nurses arrived on the scene and covered the woman to protect her from the rain and cold. Ms. Bonilla checked the woman's vital signs and comforted her until the paramedics arrived. Ms. Bonilla remained on the scene and provided details of her response to the accident to law enforcement personnel. When she was certain that she wasn't needed any further, Ms. Bonilla continued on her route, dropped her daughter off at child care, and reported to Lanterman Developmental Center for duty. Ms. Bonilla was soaked by the rain and clearly shaken by the incident but remained on duty for her entire shift. Ms. Bonilla's actions, without regard for her own safety, saved the woman from sustaining additional injuries and possibly death and helped to prevent further accidents from other drivers traveling this stretch of the highway. The State of California takes great pride in presenting to Teodora "Dora" Bonilla, this Gold Medal of Valor, for her extraordinary act of heroism extending above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Brian Borella

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

12/22/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 21, 2010, at approximately 6 30 p m , Caltrans employees Brian Borella, Joe J Martinez, and Alberto P. Miramontes began their storm patrol shifts on State Route 330 in the San Bernardino Mountains where heavy rain had been falling for 24 hours. Mudslides were occurring and rocks were falling onto the roadway at numerous locations At approximately 3 00 a m on December 22, the men requested the route be closed for the safety of the traveling public. As the crew began closing the route, there were still 10 -15 vehicles on the road with approximately 20 people inside and the crew realized they would have to lead the motorists out. Severe slides over six feet high rendered the roadway impassable in several locations and the men had to stop their vehicles, punch holes in the mud and rock blockages, and escort the motorists through Large rocks were falling and striking the vehicles, debris was raining down on them as well. The roadway was visibly failing in two locations, yet due to Mr Borella, Mr Martinez and Mr Miramontes, everyone made it out safely. It took six months to repair the road

Dennis Boren

Battalion Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

8/20/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Battalion Chief Dennis M Boren, on August 20th, 2001, performed an act of heroism to his own personal safety when he rescued three citizens who become trapped during the North Fork Fire in Eastern Madera County. On August 20th, 2001, at approximately 3:00 p m , CDF Chief Officer, Battalion Chief Boren received word from an Air Tactical Group Supervisor that a resident's escape route was cut-off by fire and smoke as the North Fork Fire rapidly spread through the 5 to 20 acre residential parce s Chief Boren advised the Air Tactical Group Supervisor of his intentions to attempt a rescue and headed toward the residence Driving through a most impossib e conditions Chief Boren found the citizen in the company of two neighbors who had come to assist her. Only expecting to find one stranded citizen and not three, Chief Boren realized that he couldn't transport all three citizens in his assigned pick-up. He then directed the trio to follow him in their own vehicle instructing them to "Roll up your windows, stay right on my bumper, I don't care if you hit me, just don't stop and don't lose sight of me!" Although the journey back to safety was perilous and the quartet's escape route was cloaked with billowing smoke and blowing ash giving very little visibility, the residents did as they had been instructed and Chief Boren was able to lead all three to safety. All who witnessed this event agree that if it had not been for Chief Boren's heroic efforts that day, the three citizens would not have been able to safely escape the fire danger

Chief Boren's quick action, courage, and disregard for his own personal safety quite possible resulted in the saving of three lives

Jack Borne

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/26/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 26, 2007, at approximately 2 30 p m , employees of Scaled Composites, an aerospace development company at Mojave Air and Space Port, were working near two large tanks of nitrous oxide gas when one of the carbon fiber tanks exploded CHP Sergeants Jeffrey Baird and Mark McCormack along with Officers Jack Borne, Jesse Borne, Stephen Hunsaker, Byron Jobe, Jeffrey Nousch and Roberta Record responded to the scene The toxic gas fumes and carbon fiber particles from the explosion posed a respiratory hazard The second tank, which contained 10,000 pounds of nitrous oxide gas, was a so damaged and in danger of exploding Because of the significant hazard and seriousness of the victims' injuries, the first responders could not wait for a hazardous materia team, so CHP personnel entered and rendered aid to the victims They he ped p ace two victims onto backboards, and carried them to a waiting life flight he icopter; two other victims were placed in ambulances and triaged at a safe zone CHP personnel remained on site evacuating the remaining Mojave Air and Space Port employees to a safe area Due to the heroic efforts of these men and women, three of the four victims were successfully rescued and lived

Jesse Borne

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/26/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 26, 2007, at approximately 2 30 p m , employees of Scaled Composites, an aerospace development company at Mojave Air and Space Port, were working near two large tanks of nitrous oxide gas when one of the carbon fiber tanks exploded CHP Sergeants Jeffrey Baird and Mark McCormack along with Officers Jack Borne, Jesse Borne, Stephen Hunsaker, Byron Jobe, Jeffrey Nousch and Roberta Record responded to the scene The toxic gas fumes and carbon fiber particles from the explosion posed a respiratory hazard The second tank, which contained 10,000 pounds of nitrous oxide gas, was also damaged and in danger of exploding Because of the significant hazard and seriousness of the victims' injuries, the first responders could not wait for a hazardous material team, so CHP personnel entered and rendered aid to the victims They helped place two victims onto backboards, and carried them to a waiting life flight helicopter, two other victims were placed in ambulances and triaged at a safe zone CHP personnel remained on site evacuating the remaining Mojave Air and Space Port employees to a safe area Due to the heroic efforts of these men and women, three of the four victims were successfully rescued and lived

Raymond Bottenfield

Sergeant

Department of Justice

6/7/2013

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On June 7, 2013 at 11:52 a.m , Santa Monica College Police Sergeant Raymond Bottenfield, who was in plain clothe and not wearing any body armor, was racing to Santa Monica College where a lone gunman had reportedly opened fire on students and faculty fatally wounding one person Further reports indicated that the gunman had earlier killed his father and older brother, torched his home, carjacked a passing motorist and forced her to drive him to the college campus Arriving on scene, Sergeant Bottenfield met with Santa Monica Police Officers Robert Sparks and Jason Salas. Learning the gunman was in the campus library they rushed to the building to find the assailant firing at a group of employees who were barricaded in a storage room Despite being exposed and vulnerable to the assailant's fire should he turn around, the three officers crossed the opened distance and commanded the shooter to drop his weapon As the shooter turned, he aimed his assault rifle at them The officers opened fire, killing the assailant ending his murderous rampage

Joseph Bottoms

Officer

Department of Justice

4/12/2012

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On April 12, 2012, responding to reports of shots fired and officers down, Officer Joseph Bottoms, along with ten other officers of the Modesto police department, arrived on scene to find Stanislaus County Sheriff's Deputy Bob Paris and civilian locksmith Glendon Engert lying unconscious outside the front door leading to the suspect s apartment front door. Armed with an arsenal, the suspect had barricaded himself inside his apartment and exchanging fire with a second deputy, Deputy Mike Glinskas, who was pinned down and had issued the ca for he p P acing ballistic shields across the front passenger window of a Modesto po ice car, a group of officers took cover on the driver's side and used the vehic e as mobi e cover to advance on the apartment while the remaining officers deployed a flash bang diversionary device Their coordinated efforts were successful in that they were able to extract Glinskas and escort him to safety and medica attention They were also able to recover Paris and Engert, both of whom had unfortunate y been mortally wounded

After an eleven hour standoff, the suspect took his own life. The actions of Officer Bottoms and his fellow officers prevented the deadly standoff from escalating further and threatening more lives

Fred Boucher

Assistant Highway Engineer

Department of Transportation

9/26/1963

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 26, 1963, Mr Boucher was en route to Coloma to inspect a construction project In a heroic attempt to save the life of a man trapped in an overturned pickup truck, Mr Boucher was hurled about 20 feet by an explosion In addition to suffering numerous burns and lacerations, an eardrum was ruptured, a leg shattered and an elbow dislocated Mr.Boucher spent several weeks in a hospital and several more weeks recuperating at his home

Christopher Bougher

Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/23/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 2:15 a m , on February 23, 2001, Officer Eric Paulson and Officer Christopher Bougher were on routine patrol The officers completed an enforcement stop in the city of Placentia and were traveling on surface streets, when Officer Paulson observed heavy smoke and flames emitting from the front of a residential structure on Melrose Street As the officers exited the vehicle, they made contact with Ms Denise Ruiz, who told them that there were occupants and "her baby" in the burning structure Officer Bougher contacted the Orange County Communications Center to advise them of the situation and to request fire department response Officer Paulson approached the front of the residence and entered the unlocked front door Due to the heavy smoke and heat, he positioned himself on hands and knees and began to "low crawl" through the structure in an attempt to locate and remove any occupants Officer Bougher joined him, and they began a systematic search, crawling room to room Both officers heard a baby crying, and they quickly moved toward the sound The officers also located several male adults and directed them to exit the building While continuing to search for more occupants, the officers encountered a woman standing in the kitchen who appeared to be holding a baby. Due to the heavy smoke, they were unable to see the baby. The woman exited the building through the rear door, and Officer Paulson and Officer Bougher followed her. Both officers assisted the woman and baby as they walked to the side of the property and to the front of the residence While the officers were at the side of the residence, they contacted several parties, who related there were more individuals to the rear of the residence, in a separate structure. Officer Paulson and Officer Bougher went to the rear of the residence. They knocked on the door of the separate structure and yelled to gain the attention of any possible occupants Three adult males exited the structure The officers subsequently assisted the three men to the front of the residence Personnel from the Placentia Police Department arrived on the scene As Officer Paulson advised the arriving unit of the situation, Officer Bougher and Placentia Police Officer DeCoste walked to the rear of the residence and conducted a final check of the structure. Officer Bougher and Officer DeCoste contacted another adult male at the rear of the residence The officers assisted in the removal of this individual as personnel from Orange County Fire Department extinguished the flames

Patrick "Pat" Bourassa

Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/20/2021

Special Act Award (Gold)

On February 20, 2021, at 2 51 a m , California Highway Patrol Officer Patrick Bourassa and three other officers were in high-speed pursuit of a vehicle traveling south on Interstate-5, near the Santa Margarita River. The vehicle had two flat tires, as a result of a successful spike strip deployment, however, the driver failed to slow down and continued to evade the pursuing officers at speeds up to 100 miles per hour The driver lost control of the vehicle, drove off the roadway edge of I-5, and overturned multiple times down a steep embankment covered with a thick brush The vehicle came to rest on its right side, approximately 150 feet down the embankment and immediate y ignited Oceanside Area Officer Gabriel Blanco and Officer Dallin Smedley arrived on scene. Officers Bourassa, Officer B anco, and two more officers traversed down the thick brush embankment and located the driver trapped in the vehic e After hearing the driver screaming for help, Officer Bourassa unsuccessfully attempted to break the windshield Officer Bourassa climbed onto the left side of the burning vehicle and with the assistance of a fellow officer, was able to open the driver's side door and cut away the side airbag Officer Bourassa reached inside, grabbed the driver's hands, and pu ed the driver out of the vehicle. Officer Bourassa and Officer Blanco pulled the driver away from the burning vehicle and rendered first aid Within minutes of saving the driver, the vehicle became comp etely engulfed in flames. Shortly thereafter, the driver was transported to nearby hospital and sustained major injuries With no regard for his own safety, Officer Bourassa went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Patrick Bourassa.

Lawrence S. Bousquet

Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/20/1999

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 20, 1999 Mr. Lawrence P Stock was at home in Truckee, California with off-duty Officer Lawrence S Bousquet performing maintenance on Officer Bousquet's personal vehicle. At approximately 4 15 p m , Mr Stock heard someone screaming and calling for help Both men ran in the direction of the screaming and saw across the pond that two children had fallen through the ice five to ten feet from the edge of the pond. The children were struggling to maintain their positions along the broken edges of the ice As Officer Bousquet and his wife got in their vehicle and sped to the other side of the pond, Mr. Stock ran and told his wife to call 911 He then ran to get an extension ladder and drove his vehicle to the other side of the pond. Upon his arrival, he saw one child being wrapped in a blanket by other people who had gathered at the scene When he saw that Officer Bousquet was standing waist deep in the water attempting to reach the other victim, he ran to the water with the ladder, extending the ladder. The girl was holding on to the ice and trembling uncontrollably She was unable to hold on to an electrical extension cord, which had been thrown to her. Mr. Stock slid the extended ladder past Officer Bousquet to the girl When it became apparent that the girl was too weak to hold on to the ladder, Mr. Stock told Officer Bousquet, "Forget this, I am not going to let this girl drown." He began to break through the ice and wade into the deeper water. Using the ladder for support, he worked his way to the girl and grabbed her with his left hand. He then worked his way back toward Officer Bousquet who then pulled both to shore. The rescued children were transported by ambulance to Tahoe Forest Hospital and treated for pre-hypothermia. All suffered from cold water exposure

Jacklyn D. Bowes

Fire Fighter I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

8/29/2006

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 29, 2006, at 3:00 p.m., CAL FIRE then Fire Apparatus Engineer and now Fire Captain William J. Smith, Firefighter I Kelsey C. DeGifford and Firefighter I Jacklyn D. Bowes were dispatched to a vegetation fire in the vicinity of Newport and Fish Hatchery Roads in Riverside. Homes on the north end of Newport Road were threatened by the fire and there were numerous reports of a woman trapped in her home. An off-duty San Bernardino Sheriff's Deputy approached the CAL FIRE Commander and identified himself as the son of the woman trapped in her home. The CAL FIRE Commander told the son that an engine was on its way and to not go up to the home. The son ignored the instructions and went to the house where he found his mother. As Fire Apparatus Engineer Smith and Firefighters DeGifford and Bowes arrived at the residence, he noticed that the rapidly spreading fire had cut off their escape route. He instructed the son and mother to take refuge inside the house, and the Engine Crew would shelter them with water from their hoses until the fire passed. Fire Apparatus Engineer Smith had approximately 30 seconds to get the victims inside the house and get the hoses ready before the fire hit the house.

Firefighter DeGifford sprayed along the south side of the house to protect it from the fire. Firefighter Bowes and Fire Apparatus Engineer Smith attempted to spray a second hose but were unable to do so because of the extreme heat from the attic vents. Fire Apparatus Engineer Smith entered the house and evacuated the occupants from the burning house and brought them to safety. Their actions saved the woman and her son's life

David F. Bradford

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/7/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 7, 2001 at approximately 2:00 p.m., the Victorville area was experiencing severe thunderstorms and flash floods. Officer David Bradford observed a pickup truck overturned onto its driver side, submerged in approximately four feet of water. Officer Michael Kerr arrived on the scene just as Ryan Bird, age 14, jumped from the passenger door and the rushing water trapped him against the undercarriage. The Officers realized there were people trapped inside the vehicle. Already on the scene were Caltrans workers Mr. Terry Gillich and Mr. Gary Ratliff and a private citizen Mr. Jim Payne who offered their assistance with the rescue. The pickup truck was being pushed downstream by the current with Ryan Bird screaming for help. The rescuers formed a human chain and entered the water. Three occupants of the overturned pickup, Ryan Bird, Mr. James Milliken, age 75, and Nathan Milliken, age 14, were pulled to safety. Ms. Carrie Milliken, age 70 and Natalie Shoemaker, age 16, were still trapped inside the pickup truck as the water continued to rise. When the pickup truck started to overturn onto its top, Officer Bradford entered the water and positioned himself at a 45-degree angle, pushing against the hood of the truck to keep it from completely overturning while he was submerged up to his neck in water. Ms. Milliken finally climbed out of the truck and jumped into the water, but was immediately pinned to the undercarriage by the swift current. Ms. Shoemaker climbed out of the pickup and successfully jumped to safety. The water began to pull Ms. Milliken alongside the undercarriage and off the back of the pickup truck. Mr. Payne broke from the human chain and dove into the water after her. Mr. Payne reached Ms. Milliken and kept her from being pulled downstream. Mr. Payne and Ms. Milliken were assisted by the Apple Valley Fire Department personnel who arrived on the scene. As the rescuers were retreating to a position of safety, Officer Bradford let go of the pickup truck. He lost his footing and fell into the water. Officer Kerr grabbed hold of Officer Bradford and pulled him to safety. The pickup truck overturned completed onto its top, with the cab completely submerged in the water. All of the victims escaped serious injury

David Bradley

Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/3/1995

Special Act Award (Gold)

On April 3, 1995, at 1:00 am, off duty Officer Bradley was awakened by the sound of a residential fire alarm. Officer Bradley went to the front of his residence and noticed the occupied residence across the street was engulfed in flames. He instructed his spouse to call the fire department and clad only in a T-shirt and shorts, ran outside to the burning structure. Unable to gain entry at the front of the house due to the flames and intense heat, he ran to a rear bedroom and yelled to the occupant of the house. One of the residents came to a small bedroom window eight feet above ground, but she was unable to open the window. Officer Bradley broke one of the glass panes and pulled her to safety. Officer Bradley, aware that there was another occupant in the residence, yelled for the other to come to the window. The occupant came to the window but passed out. Officer Bradley was able to grab his arm and attempted to pull him through the window, but could only support him over the dresser under the window which enabled the occupant to breathe some fresh air. Heavy smoke was pouring out of the window and the heat was becoming unbearable. Officer Bradley attempted to remove the citizen through the window, however was unable to do so because of the citizen's large physique and the lack of leverage from his location below the high window. When Deputy Keith Kleinman from San Bernardino County arrived, he and Officer Bradley held the occupant's head near the window away from the intense heat and smoke. The Big Bear Lake Fire Department arrived and firefighters were able to push the resident through the window. Officer Bradley and Deputy Kleinman assisted him through the window from the outside. Both rescuers sustained extensive smoke inhalation. Unfortunately, the occupant succumbed to his injuries on April 19.

John Bradley

Sergeant

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

2/4/2021

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the morning of February 4, 2021, during their commute from Indio to Ironwood State Prison, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctional Lieutenant (Lt.) Heriberto Mora and his wife, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Registered Nurse Mayra Mora, came upon a car crash. They pulled over, and as trained first responders, began providing aid to the passengers of the mangled truck resting in a ditch along Interstate 10. The truck's driver had a head injury that was bleeding profusely, and a little girl was found outside of the truck. Another passenger was also found on the ground near the wrecked vehicle. Registered Nurse Mora took her husband's sweater and began treating the truck driver's head wound. She then calmed the young child, who did not appear injured. Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Sergeant John Bradley also stopped to lend aid to the crash victims. Lieutenant Mora noticed a car seat in the vehicle, and with Sergeant Bradley's assistance, the two broke open the rear passenger window, undid the baby harness, and got the baby out to safety. Meanwhile, Registered Nurse Mora treated the woman on the ground, keeping her stationary to avoid aggravating internal or neck injuries. Together, Lieutenant Heriberto Mora, Registered Nurse Mayra Mora, and Sergeant John Bradley stayed with the victims until firefighters and paramedics arrived. It is worth noting that other prison staff also stopped to help with bottles of water and blankets for the victims. Once the scene was stabilized, the Moras and Sergeant Bradley went off to work. With no regard for his own safety, Sergeant Bradley went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Sergeant John Bradley

Josh Brennan

Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

7/23/2007

Special Service Award (Silver)

At 5 00 pm on July 23, 2007, California Department of Fish and Game Warden Josh Brennan was on a routine foot patrol near the town of Paradise in rural Butte County, when he saw a man down in the canyon and partially submerged in the river. Using hundreds of feet of rope, he climbed down the steep canyon to the west branch of the Feather River, where he pulled the man out of the water and onto the shore The man was intoxicated and unconscious. Unable to make contact with his dispatch from his portable radio, he climbed back up the canyon wall to his truck to request assistance. Despite the 100 degree temperatures, Warden Brennan climbed down the canyon wall to monitor the man's health and wait for the rescue helicopter. A short time later, the helicopter crew arrived, but quickly determined rescue was impossible due to the steep conditions of the canyon.

To assist Warden Brennan, Kent Harrison, a Patrol Lieutenant with the Department of Fish and Game, arrived, and Warden Brennan again climbed up and down the canyon wall to meet the Lieutenant, brief him on the situation and direct him back to the scene Because night-time rope system rescue is dangerous and due to the heavy intoxication of the man, Warden Brennan and Lieutenant Harrison decided it was safer to remain on site until morning. Both stayed awake throughout the night to monitor the man's health and safety. At 5 00 the next morning, they again climbed the canyon wall and brought the man to safety

Frank Brignoli

Assistant Superintendent of Nursing Services

Department of Mental Hygiene

8/12/1968

Special Act Award (Gold)

Chief Security Officer Alton Hoxie, Frank Brignoli, Assistant Superintendent of Nursing Services and Dr. Allen F. Hendy were at the Patton psychiatric hospital when a gunman, a former patient, arrived with a hostage at the hospital's admission office at noon. He had come back to Patton "desperate to seek and help and a doctor". The gunman had already shot his wife and then forced a fellow employee he took as hostage to drive him to a bar in Cucamonga where he shot a family friend. Mr. Hoxie, Mr. Brignoli and Dr. Hendy talked steadily to the ex-patient who was pressing a gun to the hostage's head. The three eventually quieted the gunman who released the hostage. They continued to talk to the man, "You've shot enough people." Mr. Brignoli told the gunman, "If you want help, then give up the gun." The man then gave up the gun and surrendered to police.

Clark Brink

Associate Air Pollution Specialist

California Air Resources Board

6/28/1993

Special Act Award (Gold)

Air Resources Board Associate Air Pollution Specialist Clark Brink performed an extraordinary act of heroism on the morning of June 28, 1993, at great risk to himself in the rescue of a woman from a burning automobile. Mr. Brink witnessed a rear-end collision that sent the victim's car out of control, across three lanes of traffic, and bursting into flames Mr Brink immediately took action. He pulled his car to a stop and stepping past a group of bystanders, observed that the driver a woman, was unconscious and wearing a seatbelt. The doors were locked and she was in imminent danger of being burned to death Despite increasing heat, smoke, and flames, Mr Brink, along with two others, used a tire iron to break the driver's window and remove the victim from the burning vehicle The victim had no vital signs so Mr Brink began to administer CPR. Mr. Brink continued for about 20 minutes despite the increasing likelihood of the nearby vehicle exploding Eventually emergency crews gained control of the burning car and took over the victim's care. Despite Mr. Brink's heroic efforts, the woman's serious condition proved fatal

Christopher R. Briones

Correctional Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

10/24/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 24, 2008, two inmates suddenly started striking an officer and a sergeant performing searches of inmates leaving the culinary kitchen at Ironwood State Prison. The Yard A alarms were activated, and Correctional Officer Christopher A. Briones immediately responded to the incident and observed two inmates fighting with two of his fellow officers. When he arrived on the scene, the two officers had gained control over the two inmates. At the same time, almost 300 inmates were inside the nearby dining hall. Some of these inmates, sensing opportunity, began to assault officers inside the dining hall. Officer Briones saw three officers stumble out of the dining hall and immediately ran to the exit door of the dining hall. Looking through the window of the door, he could see that an officer was on the ground near the wall, approximately seven rows away from the entrance door. The officer was being kicked by several inmates. Unable to enter the hall from this door, Officer Briones ran to the entrance door and yelled to another officer to open the door. Without regard for his own safety, he drew his baton and ran into the dining hall. As he entered, the inmates started attacking him with trays and cups. Officer Briones covered his face and head with his arm and moved toward the officer who was still being attacked. Using his body as a shield, Officer Briones dragged the downed officer to safety, stopping at times to defend them both against inmates as he moved toward the exit. Once the downed officer was safe, Officer Briones reentered the dining hall to assist another officer who was walking toward the exit with a bloodied face. Officer Briones grabbed the officer, who immediately fell to her knees once outside the dining hall. Officer Briones displayed exceptional courage by putting his own safety aside by entering the dining hall to save his fellow officers from serious injury or possible death.

Thomas Britt

Highway Maintenance Leadworker

Department of Transportation

3/1/2019

Special Service Award (Silver)

On March 1, 2018, around 5:00 pm., California Department of Transportation Highway Maintenance Leadworker Thomas (Dave) Britt was plowing snow during a winter storm when he received a call from California Department of Transportation Maintenance Supervisor Lonnie Swartout. He needed immediate assistance with a vehicle accident located on a narrow part of the road with a very steep embankment. The vehicle was about 100 feet down the embankment, on its side, hung up on a tree and facing uphill. Mr. Britt proceeded down the hill to the vehicle, where California Department of Transportation Highway Maintenance Worker Benjamin Anderson was already assisting the injured passengers. A woman was found outside of the vehicle with numerous injuries and was becoming hypothermic due to exposure to the cold and heavy snowfall and a man was found trapped inside of the vehicle with two puppies. Mr. Britt comforted the barely conscious woman by keeping her warm with the articles of clothing he could find and using plastic tarps to keep her dry. Approximately two hours later, the fire department brought a Stokes Basket which was used to load and hike her out on a trail. Mr. Anderson managed to extract and rescue the kenneled puppies and man from inside of the vehicle. When Mr. Britt went to retrieve his plow truck to assist clearing the road for rescue vehicles, he discovered that his plow truck had caught fire after being parked for five hours. He extinguished the fire and then took a California Department of Transportation crewmember back to the maintenance yard so he could get another plow truck to open the road. Mr. Britt assisted in this very dangerous rescue for almost 24 hours in extreme weather, steep terrain, and in a rural area with difficult access. Mr. Britt had a pivotal role in this rescue and with no regard to his own safety, he went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation Highway Maintenance Leadworker Thomas Britt.

Brian Brown

Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/24/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Brian Brown, on January 24, 2003, performed an act of heroism at risk to his personal safety in an attempt to rescue a victim from a burning vehicle. At approximately 2:35 a.m., Officer Brown, arrived at the scene of a traffic collision, on northbound U.S. 101, south of Vine and Avenue, in North Hollywood. Witnesses pointed out a white 1992 Mazda, which was resting in the Los Angeles River wash basin with major damage and flames coming out of the engine area. Officer Brown directed his trainee, Officer Pardue, to wait at the edge of the Los Angeles River in order to direct fire personnel to the location. Officer Brown climbed over a five foot chain link fence that was on top of a ten foot concrete wall at the west edge of the Los Angeles River. Officer Brown lowered himself from the top of the concrete wall and then jumped to the river bed. He ran to the burning car and found only one person inside, a male in his early twenties, unconscious, bleeding profusely, and apparently trapped inside of the right front passenger seat. Officer Brown placed his body inside of the vehicle and grabbed occupant under the arms, attempting to pull him out. He made several attempts as the fire spread into the passenger compartment and began to engulf the car. Officer Brown was momentarily overtaken by the heat and smoke and turned away to get fresh air. He immediately returned and again attempted pulling the trapped man from the vehicle. Unfortunately, the fire and smoke became too intense, forcing Officer Brown to discontinue his rescue efforts. The Los Angeles City Fire Department finally arrived on scene, put out the fire, and eventually cut the victim from the vehicle. The victim was transported to the Grossman Burn Center in Van Nuys for treatment of his severe burns and internal injuries. Unfortunately, on January 25, 2003, the male victim passed away.

Wilbur Dwight Brown, Jr.

Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

6/18/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 18, 2008, at approximately 8:00 a.m., California Department of Fish and Game Warden Wilbur Dwight Brown, Jr. was out of uniform, driving a department vehicle to pick up a department horse trailer at Lake Success in Tulare County. As he was approaching the dam, an Army Corps of Engineers' Ranger flagged him down and pointed to a man standing by a guardrail who was wanted for breaking into a vehicle and stealing. As Warden Brown drove over to where the man was standing, the man moved downhill away from the highway. Warden Brown parked his patrol vehicle, blocking the man's access to the highway and walked toward him, advising him that he was a peace officer and was placing him under arrest. Warden Brown commanded the man to get down on the ground and put his hands behind his back. The man did not obey; instead he cursed and yelled at Warden Brown, questioning why he was being arrested. The man then pulled a knife out of his pocket, pointed it at Warden Brown and lunged toward him. When Warden Brown drew his gun, demanding that he drop the knife, the man demanded the warden shoot him. Warden Brown could have used deadly force, but instead kept telling the man to lay down the knife and give himself up. Warden Brown stepped forward slowly with his gun pointed at the man. The man threw his knife at him, turned and fled toward the lake. Warden Brown holstered his gun, returned to his truck, and radioed the Tulare County dispatch for back-up assistance. He then followed the suspect in his truck. Tulare County Sheriff's Department immediately dispatched two officers to help apprehend the suspect who was now running down the dam's rock face. Warden Brown followed the man until the officers arrived. He then left his truck to close in on the suspect who was heaving rocks at the officers. Warden Brown and the officers chased the man for almost one mile before they were able to surround him. It took Warden Brown and the two officers combined efforts to finally restrain, handcuff, and take the man into custody. Had it not been for Warden Brown's actions, training and composure, it is likely this suspect would not have survived.

Michael L. Brunson

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/10/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry, Fire Captain Mike Brunson, on September 10th, 2001, performed an act of heroism at risk to his own personal safety when he safely transported two fire engines, their crews, and a pickup to safety during a burn-over during the Darby Fire Incident. On September 10th, 2001, Captain Brunson was a part of an engine strike team working in the Doud's Landing area of the Darby Incident in the Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit. In route to their assignment, Captain Brunson's engine and the one he was following stopped to attack a spot fire. As the fire activity escalated, Captain Brunson recognized the danger signs, warned others and began moving equipment to a secure area. First, he moved an engine parked in front of his to a safe area, he saw that the fire activity had increased to a point that called for abandoning control operations and moving all personnel and equipment to a safe area. He then moved a CDF pickup to the safety area because of spotting and rapidly increasing fire intensity. After parking the pickup, Captain Brunson was ready to go back for his engine and the two engine crews. By this time, however, the roadway was engulfed by fire and an attempt was made to take Captain Brunson back to his engine in a dozer tender, but the operator decided that it was unsafe due to the fuel in the back of his truck. Undaunted, Captain Brunson secured all of his personal protective equipment and ran back down the hot and extremely smoky road to his engine. When he arrived at the engine he found a campaign and six firefighters in the cab with shelters deployed to cover the windows. He opened the door on the driver side. Got in the cab and drove the engine to the safe area. After arriving at the safe area, Captain Brunson determined the status and well being of his crew. His engine had sustained paint and light damage but was otherwise fully serviceable. Without Captain Brunson's actions, lives could have been at risk and substantial damage would have been sustained b the three CDF units he moved and the fire to a home he and his crew extinguished. Captain Brunson's courage and determination in the face of danger make him deserving of the Medal of Valor

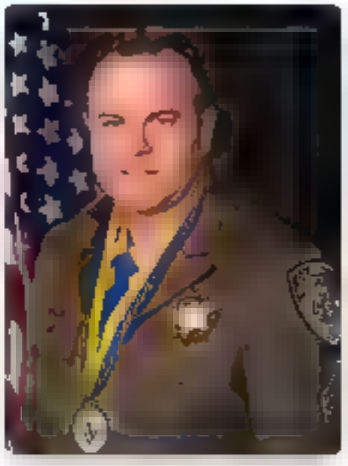
Michael Brush II

California Highway Patrol Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

3/19/2011

Special Service Award (Silver)



On March 19, 2011, at approximately 5:00 p.m., California Highway Patrol Sergeant Michael Brush II was off-duty and inside his home in Modesto when he heard his neighbor's alarm go off and his wife told him someone was breaking into their neighbor's house. He immediately grabbed his firearm, told his daughter to call 911, and went to investigate. When Sergeant Brush opened his front door, he saw the suspect attempting to remove the glass from the neighbor's window. The neighbors were home and screaming "Get out of our house!" at the suspect. Sergeant Brush crossed the street and yelled out to the suspect who immediately stopped. He turned towards Sergeant Brush and began to approach in a threatening manner, holding a shard of glass in one hand and a pair of pruning shears in the other. Sergeant Brush displayed his badge, drew his weapon, and commanded the suspect to stop. The suspect, however, ignored his commands and continued towards him. Sergeant Brush attempted to disarm the suspect by kicking his hand, but he still continued to move towards the officer. Fearing for his life, Sergeant Brush raised his firearm and fired, mortally wounding the suspect.

The ensuing investigation revealed the suspect had an extensive history of violent behavior and had recently assaulted sheriff deputies

Damon Bryson

Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/11/1971

Special Act Award (Gold)

Officer Bryson arrived at the scene of a fiery multi-car collision on Interstate 80 in Berkeley and was informed two children were still trapped in one of the burning cars. He approached the vehicle, opened the rear door and, disregarding the shooting flames, leaned far into the vehicle to find a small boy cringing on the floor. Officer Bryson pulled the boy from the vehicle, secured him with a bystander and returned to the same vehicle to search for the second child. It wasn't until later he learned that the second child had already been removed from the vehicle.

Sabrina Buis

State Park Peace Officer

Department of Parks and Recreation

11/9/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of November 9, 2018, State Park Peace Officer Sabrina Buis was called in to respond to the Camp Fire. She worked with State Park Peace Officer Supervisor Sergeant Travis Gee and together they helped evacuate hundreds of people who remained in burned-over areas in the Town of Paradise. While helping rescue and evacuate people, Officer Buis and Sergeant Gee came across flames and downed trees that blocked roadways, forcing them to find alternative routes to prevent the evacuees from being trapped by the swift-moving fire. At one point, they worked with a CalFire captain to cut down power lines and clear debris along Clark Road to rescue evacuees who were surrounded by fire. They were aware of the large number of lives that had already been lost and yet, bravely and tirelessly, put themselves in harm's way to save others. Officer Buis was a new officer with California State Parks and was only a few months out of her field training program. Despite her rookie status, Officer Buis responded and handled herself like a seasoned professional that day. Together with Sergeant Gee, she remained alert and committed to rescuing and helping countless people in the community. With no regard for her own safety, Officer Buis went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Parks and Recreation State Park Peace Officer Sabrina Buis.

Al Burciaga

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/10/1992

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 10:00 p.m. while on routine patrol, Officer Allyn "A." Burciaga, observed a female pedestrian standing on the Storke Road overcrossing The woman was looking at US 101 traffic When Officer Burciaga spoke to the woman, she appeared distraught. Officer Burciaga advised dispatch of the situation, requested a traffic s ow down and asked for backup. As he exited the patrol car, the woman c imbed over the railing. She threatened to jump if he approached. Officer Burciaga attempted to calm and coax the woman back to the safe side of the railing and off the narrow edge. As other Officers and Deputies arrived to assist, the woman seemed to become more agitated and kept looking over her shoulder at the traffic be ow One of the officers distracted the woman and Officer Burciaga took the opportunity to rush and grab her. He had made his mind up that the woman would jump and preplanned to grab her by the hair When she saw him running toward her, she attempted to jump. Officer Burciaga grabbed her by her long hair and held on for dear life. As the woman continued to fall, Officer Burciaga fe t his e bows hit and come to rest on the metal rai ing Two ives hung in balance as Officer Burciaga strugg ed not to lose his footho d or his grip on the woman. At this point the other Officers and Deputies rushed in to pull the struggling woman back over the railing. As attested to by witnesses, the on y thing holding the woman to the bridge was Officer Burciaga. Her feet were actually dangling over the lanes of traffic. Thank to Officer Burciaga's correct assessment of the situation, his quick actions and his wi ingness to jeopardize his own life, the woman was saved.

Shawn Burkhead

Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/6/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 6, 2010, California Highway Patrol Officer Shawn Burkhead responded to a call of a vehicle on fire on eastbound State Route 118 near Rocky Peak Road, in Simi Valley. Upon arrival, Officer Burkhead found the vehicle on the shoulder of the road with flames and smoke billowing from under the engine compartment. As he approached the burning vehicle, he was surprised to find the driver still seated in the driver's seat as the flames around him intensified. Despite the flames surrounding the vehicle, Officer Burkhead approached closer and directed the driver to exit the vehicle. The driver was conscious but unresponsive to Officer Burkhead's commands. Officer Burkhead suspected the driver's level of consciousness was severely diminished due to intoxication. After several unsuccessful verbal attempts to get the driver out of the vehicle, Officer Burkhead made the decision to physically remove him. As Officer Burkhead opened the driver's door, the right front tire exploded and flames began shooting out from the dashboard vents. He then physically reached in and extricated the six-foot, four-inch tall, 235 pound, resistive driver from his burning vehicle. Immediately thereafter the flames entered the vehicle interior and grew out of control.

During the rescue, Officer Burkhead sustained minor injuries as the flames singed his left arm and he suffered smoke inhalation and extreme heat exposure. The driver was unharmed and was subsequently arrested and booked for suspicion of driving under the influence. Officer Burkhead's actions, without regard for his personal safety, saved this man's life. The State of California takes great pride in presenting Officer Shawn Burkhead, this Gold Medal of Valor, for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

James R. Burkhouse

Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

4/2/2020

Special Service Award (Silver)

On Thursday April 2, 2020 at 6:45am, while off duty and on his way to work, Caltrans Equipment Operator II James Burkhouse came upon a major two vehicle head-on traffic collision. A small passenger vehicle and a fully loaded tractor trailer collided on State Route 18 in the rural town of Lucerne Valley, California. As the first to arrive, and leveraging his previous experience as a paid call firefighter, Mr. Burkhouse instinctively and without hesitation looked past the chaos and wrecked vehicles and went to work immediately triaging and assessing the involved victims. The first vehicle that Mr. Burkhouse came upon was a small passenger vehicle with massive front end and side end damage. The vehicle also had major intrusions into the driver's side of the vehicle, pushing the firewall of the vehicle and the steering wheel into the driver. Upon completing a trauma assessment, Mr. Burkhouse determined that the driver was struggling to breathe, had massive hemorrhaging, a compound long bone fracture, and many other life-threatening injuries. An off-duty Mercy Air helicopter paramedic arrived with medical equipment and Mr. Burkhouse instinctively assisted the off-duty paramedic with applying several tourniquets on the driver, holding the driver's neck in a neutral position, and using a bag valve mask to breathe for the driver. It took San Bernardino County Firefighters roughly an hour and a half to remove the driver from the wreckage once they arrived on scene. The driver was air-lifted to a local area trauma center where he was in a coma for several months following many emergency surgeries. The victim has since made a miraculous recovery. The driver happened to be James Burkhouse's fellow state employee and Lead Worker. He survived this life changing accident because of the quick and decisive actions that Mr. Burkhouse chose to employ that morning at the accident scene. With no regard for his own safety, Mr. Burkhouse went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Transportation Equipment Operator II James Richard Burkhouse

Donald Burnett

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/28/1993

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 1 03 a m , Officer Don Burnett and his partner Officer Linda Burnett responded to a fire personnel ca regarding a smoke coming from a trailer and chi dren crying Upon arrival, they found a trailer engu fed in smoke. Deputies Don DeWitt and Wally Wallman were already inside of the trailer having gained entry by breaking out the front window. As Officer Burnett climbed on a box in front of the front window, Deputy Wallman appeared in the window, gasping for air Deputy Wallman advised Officer Burnett that he could not locate the children and he had ost Deputy DeWitt inside. Officer Burnett entered the mobi e home through the window and began to search for the children and Deputy DeWitt. The interior of the mobi e home was filled from ceiling to floor with thick acrid smoke and visibility was imited to inches. Additionally, a of the wa s, windows, and doors were obscured with blankets and the floor was littered with clothing and debris. Officer Burnett met Deputy DeWitt in the ha way and took a sma chi d from him Officer Burnett took the child to his partner Officer Linda Burnett and handed the chi d out of the window to her. He then continued his search. Officer Burnett began pu ing the b ankets off the wa s to ocate the doors Once ocated, he forced them open At the rear door he again encountered Deputy DeWitt carrying the second chi d and guided him safely out of the door. Outside, he and the Deputy tried to find out if there were still people in the trailer. Unsure, Officer Burnett told Deputy DeWitt that he was going back in. He re-entered the trailer a second time and conducted a search of the bathroom and rear bedroom He realized the smoke was just too thick and he was having trouble breathing, so he crawled back to the rear door and exited the trailer. The children would surely have perished The trai er doors had been locked from the outside by their mother.

Richard "Rick" N. Burnett

Water Resources Technician II

Department of Water Resources

2/8/1998

Special Act Award (Gold)

Water Resources Technician Richard " Burnett, Associate Engineering Geologist William Shanks, Associate Engineer Ernest Taylor, and Senior Engineer Kurt C Kovac, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great personal risk to their own safety in the rescue of Ms. Rachelle Anderson's two sma chi dren, Oscar and Alicia, who were trapped in an overturned car that was sinking 15 feet offshore in the storm-swo en, frigid, swift, and muddy Sacramento River. On the morning of February 8, 1998, at approximately 7:55 a.m., while on special flood duty for the Department of Water Resources in the Delta, near Antioch, Mr Burnett, Mr Shanks, Mr Tay or and Mr. Kovac were flagged down by a truck driver Looking down the perilous levee embankment, they saw a car sinking into the river, its rear ha f sti visible above the surface of the water. Mr. Burnett immediate y ran down the embankment, jumped into the water and swam towards the car As soon as he reached it, he saw Oscar, the baby, sti strapped in the chi d car sea, sinking into the water. Mr. Burnett grabbed the car seat just as Oscar's head was slipping below the surface He freed Oscar and then handed him to Mr Tay or Mr Kovac met Mr Taylor on the muddy slope of the steep embankment and took Oscar up to the road. Still trapped inside the car, three-year o d A icia was sti submerged and under peril with each passing second Mr. Shanks first and then Mr. Burnett, dove under the murky, co.d water into the car through the open door on the driver's side, each attempting to rescue A icia It was very difficult to see and the rescuers became disoriented inside the overturned car. They each tried to free Alicia from her fastened seat belt without success Time running out, the only way to rescue Alicia was to turn the car upright The men joined forces, trying to reposition the car upright. Incredibly, the 3 000 pound car turned easi y Mr Burnett dove under the water, reached in the passenger-side door and re eased the unconscious child from her seat belt. Mr. Burnett and Mr. Taylor rushed to get her ashore. By this time Alicia was unconscious, extremely co d, ashen, and not breathing, her body was completely limp. Mr. Burnett and another individual took turns giving her mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Alicia finally gasped for air, coughed her throat clear of water, and started breathing. Mr. Taylor and Mr Kovac wrapped Alicia in jackets and sweatshirts, and Mr Shanks held her in the warm truck unti paramedics arrived. Meanwhile, Mr. Kovac brought Ms. Anderson up the embankment to be close to her children. The State of California takes great pride in presenting these medals of valor for acts of heroism extending far and above the normal call of duty

Chad Burns

Firefighter

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

3/3/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)

In the early hours of March 3, 2020, Firefighter Chad Burns responded to the City of Temecula for a confined space rescue. Upon arrival, it was determined that a victim was yelling for help from a storm water run-off pipe system. Firefighter Burns, the primary rescuer, entered the pipe system to rescue the victim. Upon entering the 36-inch pipe, he traveled 100 feet and then made entry into an 18-inch pipe. Firefighter Burns traversed approximately 175 feet into the 18-inch pipe, maximizing the capability of the rescue system. Firefighter Burns, like many other confined space technicians, has completed this task in a training situation on a small scale, but never at such a distance while wearing full personal protective equipment, a rope system with harness, and supplied-air respirator. In order to move, Firefighter Burns had to completely stretch out and crawl through the tight space. To retreat, he had to crawl backwards through the pipe. Firefighter Burns made his way down the pipe system in the cold and dark without knowing how far he was going to travel. All the while, the victim, who was acting erratically, made violent threats to Firefighter Burns while he was making his way forward. Firefighter Burns had no idea what direction the victim was facing within the pipe system, had he been face to face with the victim, he could have easily been attacked. Firefighter Burns would have had an extremely difficult time trying to escape to safety had this occurred. At any point, Firefighter Burns could have stopped the rescue attempt due to safety concerns but he continued forward without hesitation. The first attempt was unsuccessful because the rope system detached from the victim. A handful of other rescuers attempted to reach the victim but none of them could traverse the 18-inch pipe because of the stress and anxiety caused by the narrow space. Firefighter Burns was called upon again to attempt a second rescue and he did not hesitate. He courageously talked another rescuer out of going into the pipe because he did not want him to have to go through the same ordeal that he had just experienced. Firefighter Burns, now cold and wet, went through the pipe a second time. The victim began throwing things at Firefighter Burns as he was making his way through the pipe. The victim retreated further up the pipe system beyond the 300-foot maximum distance that standard rescue systems are able to accommodate. Firefighter Burns' efforts surpassed the standards and expectations as he put himself at great risk to save another human life. With no regard for his own safety, Firefighter Burns went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Firefighter Chad Burns

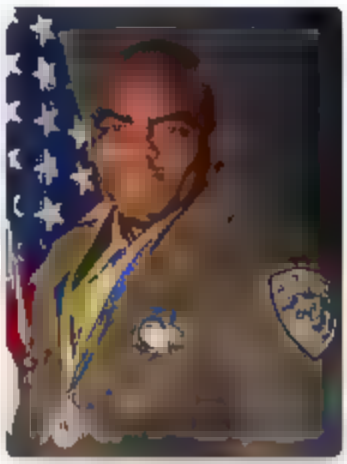
Michael Burton

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/20/2014

Special Service Award (Silver)



On July 20, 2014, at approximately 9:35 a.m., California Highway Patrol Officer Michael Burton was off duty and traveling with his family in Kern County when he encountered a traffic collision involving a pickup truck that had gone off the road and overturned onto its roof. Officer Burton pulled over to assist. He realized the driver was trapped inside the cab, but he could not reach him because the roof was crushed and the doors would not open. The engine compartment was smoldering and igniting. Two men arrived and with Officer Burton bearing the brunt of the effort, they were able to roll the truck back on its wheels. Officer Burton tried to reach the driver, but the fire increased and smoke filled the cab, eventually becoming so thick he could no longer see the driver. A Kern County deputy arrived and attempted unsuccessfully to put the fire out with his fire extinguisher. Suddenly, the driver reached through the shattered rear window and cried for help. Officer Burton climbed into the truck bed, grabbed the driver's arm and began pulling. Before long he was able to free the driver's other arm, head and shoulders, and then pulled him out. With the assistance of the deputy, Officer Burton carried the man to safety seconds before the truck became fully engulfed in flames.

Kyle Bush

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/27/2016

Special Service Award (Silver)

On July 27, 2016, at 2:41 a.m., Officer Kyle Bush, and his partners Officers David Crislip and Felix Serpas, were on patrol, when they observed a car pass them at a high rate of speed. They followed the car and it suddenly veered to the right across all lanes and exited I-10 at Francisquito Avenue. The officers continued to follow and observed it fail to stop at the stop sign at the end of the off-ramp. As the car accelerated onto North Garvey Avenue, Officer Crislip initiated an enforcement stop. The car failed to yield, and continued to travel at approximately 60-70 miles per hour on North Garvey Avenue. The car turned onto Big Dalton Road and drifted to the right, striking a raised concrete curb, several trees, a water main line, and a fire hydrant. The car then spun back into the roadway and immediately caught on fire. Officer Bush exited the patrol vehicle and retrieved a fire extinguisher while the driver of the car climbed over the passenger seats and exited through the rear right passenger door. Officer Crislip ran to the burning car and assisted the driver to safety. As Officer Bush prepared to battle the growing flames of the burning car, Officer Crislip observed a woman trapped on the rear right floorboard of the car. Officer Crislip reached into the car through the thick smoke and intense heat, and with great effort, removed the passenger from the car and moved her to a safe location. As Officer Bush used the fire extinguisher to combat the intense flames, Officer Serpas and Officer Crislip heard additional screaming and saw another passenger trapped in the front seat. Officer Bush depleted the contents of the fire extinguisher and ran to the passenger side of the car where he observed Officer Serpas use his knife to cut the passenger's seat belt. Officer Bush, with the help of Officer Serpas and Officer Crislip again braved the heat, smoke, and flames to remove the passenger from the car. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Bush's heroic service helped to save three lives from a burning vehicle. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Kyle Bush

Brian Scott Bushey

Officer

California Highway Patrol

11/3/2006

Special Act Award (Gold)

On November 3, 2006 at approximately 10:00 p.m. California Highway Patrol Officer Brian Scott Bushey was on patrol in rural Alpine County when he responded to a call of a collision involving a vehicle overturned in an adjacent creek. Upon arrival, he was informed that a female victim was trapped inside. Officer Bushey made his way down the embankment to the vehicle where he observed a Toyota 4Runner still running on its left side partially submerged in a flowing creek. Inside was a female in the driver seat thrashing frantically in an attempt to keep her head above the water, with her left arm pinned between the 4Runner and the creek bottom. Officer Bushey originally thought about utilizing his patrol vehicle's winch to tow the 4Runner out of the creek, however this was not an option due to the icy conditions of the roadway. He approached the submersed vehicle and crawled into the passenger area behind the driver's seat to assist the panicked driver in keeping her head above the water. During this effort, Officer Bushey stood in frigid, waist-deep water and gave reassurance to the woman that she would be rescued. Officer Bushey remained in this position for nearly 45 minutes until fire personnel were able to safely raise the vehicle and allow the extrication of the victim from the 4Runner.

Officer Bushey's actions saved the woman's life.

Michael D. Butner

Caltrans Tree Maintenance Lead Worker

Department of Transportation

2/23/2023

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the night of February 23, 2023, around 11 00 p m , heavy snow and gusting winds were blowing through sections of Highway 101 in northern Mendocino County near Confusion Hill. It was one of the largest snowfalls in recent history for the area Trees and powerlines were falling, and vehicles were disabled along the right-of-way due to the dangerous icy conditions and debris in the road During an extended shift, attempting to clear trees from the traveiway, Tree Maintenance Lead Worker Michael Butner and Tree Maintenance Worker Gonzalo Garcia encountered a couple who were trave ing in their RV. The RV was unable to safely make it out of the area due to ow-hanging branches, downed trees, power lines and disabled vehicles. During a conversation, the couple stated to Mr. Butner and Mr. Garcia that they were planning to sleep in their RV until the morning in hopes the highway would be passable. After hearing this, both Mr Butner and Mr. Garcia became concerned for the couple's safety as trees were active y uprooting and falling in close proximity to their RV Due to the inc ement weather and snow load, they explained to the couple that their RV was under a tree that looked susceptible to failure and pleaded for them to take their tow-behind vehicle and leave the area to safety The couple were extremely re uctant to eave their belongings but were eventually convinced that getting out of the area was the securest idea. Outside in the harsh weather conditions, Mr. Butner and Mr Garcia assisted the couple in unhooking their vehicle from the RV, oading up their important belongings, physically pushing the two-wheel drive vehic e to he p it gain traction and escorting them out of the area into a safe ocation About an hour and a half after Mr. Butner and Mr. Garcia accompanied the coup e out of the area, the large tree above their RV fell and crashed through the RV, destroying it completely The iving room, kitchen, and bathroom were all flattened under the weight of the tree. Had the couple not been convinced to leave, there could have been severe injuries or even death Mr Butner and Mr. Garcia could have gone about their normal duties, working to open the highway. Instead, they went out of their way, risking their own safety, to ensure the couple was out of harm's way. From convincing them to leave to physically helping them unhitch their vehic e and escorting them to safety, Mr Butner and Mr Garcia went beyond the ca of duty The couple called the next day and eft a voicemai on the phone of Mr. Butner thanking them both for their service and for caring enough to help them out of a dangerous situation. Mr. Butner and Mr. Garcia's situationa awareness and concern for this couple's safety was outstanding Their professional knowledge and thoughtfulness of the possible outcomes resulted in lives saved or severe injury avoided The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Meda of Valor to California Department of Transportation, Caltrans Tree Maintenance Lead Worker Michae Butner for his heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty

Randall Byerly

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/5/1984

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 11 30 a m , a Sacramento based CHP he icopter with Officer Randall Byerly onboard as an observer, was summoned to Mono County by sheriff's deputies after a man hiked to Bridgeport and said his friend had fallen on a rock and was injured. The he icopter stopped over at Bridgeport before flying on to Pee er lake, which is located in rugged terrain northeast of Yosemite National Park The he icopter started to take off after picking up the victim, but then .ost power and crashed into the lake. When the he icopter crashed, Officer Byerly escaped the downed aircraft through a broken windshield After he escaped the helicopter overturned and he climbed aboard the craft's belly, The helicopter pilot popped to the surface and began calling for help. Officer Byerly plunged back into the icy water and swam to the pilot, who had a broken back, and helped him swim the 200 feet to shore. The helicopter sank as the two officers were swimming away from it. Unfortunate y, the victim did not survive the crash

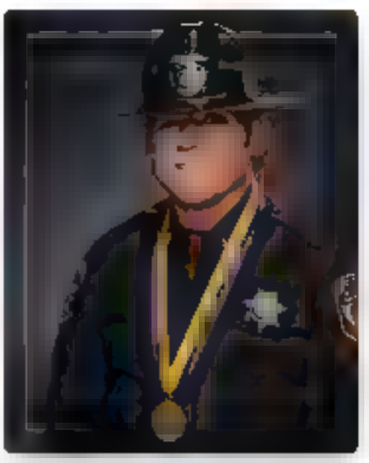
Timothy Cabral

Peace Officer Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/29/2022

Special Service Award (Silver)



On June 29, 2022, at approximately 5:54 p.m., the Perris Emergency Command Center dispatched a response to a three-vehicle traffic collision with a person trapped inside one of the cars. The first arriving unit was Riverside County Sheriff's Deputy Carlos Rosado, who broadcasted that the vehicle was on fire and confirmed the driver was trapped. Deputy Rosado requested additional nearby units that were carrying fire extinguishers to respond. CAL FIRE Peace Officer Fire Captains Tim Cabral, Kory McGranahan, John May, Joe Green and Arie Sosa heard the radio call and responded that they were on duty and assigned to their patrol nearby. Upon arrival, the officers observed that the driver was trapped, screaming, burning and bleeding. The driver needed to be pulled from the vehicle, but no one could pry open the door given the extreme conditions. Officer Green rushed to provide support by moving fire extinguishers and assisting Officers McGranahan and May. Due to the twisted metal and hidden fire between the engine and the dashboard, the fire extinguishers did not suppress the fire. Officer McGranahan climbed into the vehicle and placed himself in the fire's path to curtail the flame's growth by inserting the fire extinguisher's dry powder into gaps and cracks near the driver's lower legs. Officer May used his handheld forceable entry tools to peel open the hood and fenders to access the seat of the fire. As more fire extinguishers arrived from nearby units, both Officers McGranahan and May used them to keep the fire from growing. Officer Cabral aided Officers McGranahan and May in attempts to combat the fire. Officer Cabral pulled his ice chest full of water to temporarily suppress the fire's growth beneath the vehicle. These forward-thinking actions slowed the fire's spread, but the driver was still in harm's way. The first fire engine arrived at approximately 6:02 p.m. Still facing the active burning fire without any fire-suppressing agent left, Officers Cabral and Sosa pulled the hose from the fire engine while the firefighters suited up in additional safety gear. Thankfully, Officers Cabral and Sosa extinguished the fire. Additional fire engines arrived and cut the driver out of the vehicle. The driver was flown by air ambulance to the nearest local trauma and burn center. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Peace Officer Fire Captain Tim Cabral for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Gilbert Caldera

Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/27/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 27, 2017, at approximately 12:45 p.m., a driver experienced dizziness, lost control of her vehicle and drove it into the All American Canal on State Route 186. As her vehicle began to sink in the strong current, she was able to free herself and enter the frigid water where she grabbed and held onto a protruding water flow meter pole. A passing motorist stopped at the scene and utilized a tow strap to pull her toward him. California Highway Patrol Officer Gilbert Caldera arrived and formed a rescue line from two 30-foot long dog leashes. He threw one end of the line to the woman and descended the concrete wall to the ledge next to her.

California Highway Patrol Sergeant Jose Serrano then arrived and noticed the rescue line was untied from her. He maneuvered himself along the top of a dangerously narrow 18 inch wide concrete wall, retrieved the end of the rescue line, and lowered it to Officer Caldera. A bystander provided a life jacket which Officer Caldera managed to place on the woman despite the strong current. A ladder was also provided and lowered into the water to assist with the rescue. Due to the strong current, Officer Caldera was forced to hold onto the tow strap with one hand and the ladder with his other hand while balancing himself on the narrow ledge to keep the ladder from being swept away. With Sergeant Serrano pulling the woman from above while carefully maintaining his balance to prevent himself from falling into the swift and frigid water, they helped the woman climb up the ladder to medical aid. With no regard to his own safety, Officer Caldera went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Gilbert Caldera.

Vincent Calderon

Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/16/1972

Special Act Award (Gold)

A pickup truck with a large camper was southbound on Route 101 approximately one half mile north of Tennant Road near Morgan Hill, when it suddenly swerved to the right, left the roadway, struck a utility pole, and then crashed into a large walnut tree. The truck exploded on impact and immediately caught on fire, fed by the gasoline tank that had separated from the vehicle and was lying under the cab. All traffic came to a stop The male victim was conscious and screaming for help, but unable to get out. 30-40 people initially stopped to help, but were driven back by the flames Traffic Officer Vincent Calderon arrived at the scene and immediately used his fire extinguisher on the victim and in the cab area when ammunition stored in the camper starting exploding. The heat drove Officer Calderon and a good Samaritan back and the good Samaritan stated at that time he gave the victim up for dead because of the heat, his trapped position, and the exploding ammunition. Officer Calderon stayed with the victim and fought his way through the flames and again tried to extract him from the vehicle, but the doors were jammed shut and the heat forced Officer Calderon back again. Meanwhile, the various types of ammunition were exploding and the fire was becoming more intense With help from the good Samaritan, Officer Calderon was finally able to pull the 220 pound victim out of the vehicle and drag him to a place of safety. It was estimated that 40 50 rounds of ammunition went off during the rescue. The victim was severely burned over thirty percent of his upper body, but expected to recover

Brian R. Cali

Firefighter I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

8/16/2012

Special Service Award (Silver)

On August 16, 2012, at approximately 7:30 p.m., Firefighter I Brian R. Cali was leaving work and en route to Temecula when he came across an accident on Highway 79. A car had gone over the embankment and was resting on its driver's side with the passenger side skyward. The engine was on fire, the car was quickly filling with smoke, and a bystander told him someone was inside. Firefighter Cali quickly grabbed a log and broke out the passenger side windows, then asked bystanders to help him put the car back on its wheels so he could reach the victim. Once the vehicle was righted, he attempted to open the doors, but they were jammed shut. The flames were now reaching the victim's legs. Firefighter Cali reached into the burning car, placed his arms around the victim's torso and attempted to lift him out, but the victim's legs were tangled in the seat belt. He asked bystanders to throw dirt on the burning engine, knowing he needed more time. With the threat of fire increasing, Firefighter Cali finally lifted the man from the burning car and administered CPR until help arrived. The victim unfortunately succumbed to his injures; however, Firefighter Cali saved him from burning inside the vehicle.

Corey Call

Forestry Equipment Manager

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

5/13/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 6 00 p.m. on May 13, 2008, Forestry Equipment Manager Corey Call was driving northbound on Hwy 101 near the city of C overda e, when he noticed a vehicle drifting from the southbound lane to the northbound lane. He did an abrupt U-turn and sped up alongside the moving car and discovered the driver was unresponsive. The vehic e crossed over the center divide, went across the northbound lane and crashed into a group of trees Mr Ca alerted the St. Helena Emergency Command Center of the accident and went to help the driver A CHP officer arrived on the scene and broke the passenger side window with his baton, allowing Mr. Call access to the victim. Mr. Call noticed smoke coming from and filling the inside of the car, and a grass fire had started to burn the area next to the vehicle. He quickly crawled into the smoke-filled car and attempted to pull the semi-conscious driver out the passenger door Unfortunately, the imited space and damage to the car made it difficu t to pull the woman out, and she s ipped back into the driver's seat Mr Call tried two more times to pull her out of the car but the smoke and heat drove him away Even with his valiant efforts, he was unable to save the woman who perished in the fire.

Kyle Callaway

Fire Fighter II

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/21/2023

Special Service Award (Silver)

On February 21, 2023, the Santa Cruz Mountains were experiencing another winter storm in a season of consecutive atmospheric rivers. While this storm had less precipitation than previous ones, local winds were steady at 36 miles per hour, with gusts up to 50 miles per hour. Many trees in the area had been weakened by previous storms, and trees more than 100 feet tall were falling, damaging structures and making roadways impassable. CAL FIRE Engine 1760, staffed by Fire Captain Josh Clark and Fire Fighter IIs Kyle Callaway and Kenneth Ellis were asked to assist the neighboring Boulder Creek Fire Department with a report of a tree that had fallen onto a house and trapped a victim inside. Engine 1760 and Boulder Creek Fire units arrived at the residence that was badly damaged. The top of a redwood tree that was over 10 feet in length and 12 inches in diameter had broken off and fallen through the roof of the home and continued through the floor, trapping a young toddler underneath. The toddler's pelvis was pinned between the tree and the badly damaged floor. Trees and other debris continued to fall from unknown directions all around, threatening the rescuers' lives. Captain Clark, Firefighters Callaway and Ellis and the Boulder Creek firefighters worked from the rooftop and inside the home to stabilize the structure's roof and floor and remove the tree while also monitoring the toddler. The toddler was fading in and out of consciousness and his condition continued to deteriorate. The crew decided to free him before the entire tree could be removed, which presented a particularly technical challenge. They had to relieve the log's weight from the toddler while preventing the roof from caving in. In an effort that can only be described as brute strength, Firefighters Callaway and Ellis lifted the remaining tree section just enough for another firefighter to pull the toddler out from underneath. Due to the weather conditions and rapid wind gusts, a helicopter air ambulance was not able to respond, so the toddler was escorted by firefighters, paramedics and sheriff deputies to a trauma center where he underwent multiple surgeries for associated injuries. Fire Captain Clark, Firefighters Callaway and Ellis and the Boulder Creek Fire Department displayed instinctual courage in this dynamic and hazardous environment. The toddler's dad shared, "If everybody wasn't doing their job, I don't know if he'd be alive or not." The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire Fighter II Kyle Callaway for his heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Antonio Camacho

Fraud Detective

Department of Insurance

9/8/2017

Special Service Award (Silver)

On September 8, 2017, at 4:30 p.m., Department of Insurance Fraud Detective Antonio Camacho was inside of a bank in Ontario, California when he heard yelling behind him. He turned around and saw a man holding a baseball bat and following another individual into the bank. Detective Camacho feared the armed man was going to hit the individual with the bat, so as the suspect came closer to him he wrapped his arms around his upper torso and arms preventing him from swinging the bat. Detective Camacho then wrestled the man to the ground, placing him in a rear arm hold while the suspect attempted to flee. The police department responded to the bank and arrested the suspect. Detective Camacho's accelerated perception of danger and his directed focus on the safety and defense of the public, resulted in the prevention of possible serious bodily injury to the individual, all while putting his own life in danger. With no regard for his own safety, Detective Camacho went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Insurance Fraud Detective Antonio Camacho.

Jack E. Campbell

Assistant State Forest Ranger

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/19/1970

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 19, 1970, Assistant State Forest Ranger Jack E. Campbell performed and extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his own personal safety and life by saving the life of an individual trapped inside a century-old mine shaft. Five Division of Forestry employees were awarded the Medal of Valor for their participation in what was described as the "Most difficult and dangerous operation of rescuing an unconscious man" 130 feet below the surface and 2,000 feet from the entrance of the century-old Hazard Mine on Volcano Creek near Foresthill in Placer County, California. The incident occurred when Clifford J. Cox, age 60, one of the mine owners, and his nephew, Richard Ward, entered the mine on an exploration trip. Mr. Cox was apparently overcome by lack of air and fell unconscious, the younger Mr. Ward barely escaped himself. Mr. Ward summoned help from the Foresthill Forest Fire Station. Assistant State Forest Rangers Campbell, Dougherty, Fire Apparatus Engineers Hamilton, Quigley and Fire Fighter Mower resoponed to the call for help. A rescue plan was formulated which eventually included other Division of Forestry personnel, inmates from the Iron Mountain Conservation Camp and volunteers who assisted in the rescue efforts. One volunteer, Lester Benbow, died during the rescue.

Louis Cannata

Firefighter

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

4/15/1990

Special Act Award (Gold)

CDF Firefighters Amador Rodrigues and Louis Cannata, on April 15, 1990, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great personal risk to their own safety and life, in the attempted rescue of a one-year old girl, trapped inside a submerged vehicle, from the swift currents of a Colorado River, near Blythe, California. At approximately 8:40 p.m., Firefighters Rodrigues and Cannata arrived at the scene where rescue efforts were well underway, and observed State Traffic Officer Reed, carrying a small boy out of the swift muddy currents of the Colorado River. Rodrigues and Cannata were advised that an infant was still trapped in the vehicle. Cannata and Rodriguez, working as a team, alternated diving into the dark waters, while risking being trapped in the vehicle themselves or being swept downstream with the unstable vehicle by the strong current. Before his second dive Cannata obtained a rope from the fire engine and was able to tie off the submerged vehicle in an attempt to stabilize it. While this helped some, it did not prevent it from moving still farther downstream into deeper water. On his third dive, Rodriguez found the infant in this car seat in the back of the car, but couldn't open the seat belt. He came up and requested a seat belt cutter. On his fourth dive, he cut the belt and retrieved the child. Rodriquez handed the child off to waiting hands along the embankment, and then jumped into the ambulance and assisted in performing CPR enroute to the hospital in Blythe.

Heraclio Cardenas

Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/19/2002

Special Act Award (Gold)

Ca ifornia Highway Patrol Officers Jacques Rodriguez and Heraclio Cardenas on December 19, 2002, performed an act of heroism at risk to their own persona safety in an attempt to rescue a victim of a burning residence. Approximately 1:40 a.m., Officer Rodriguez and his partner, Officer Cardenas, were patro ing the unincorporated area of Imperial County near the City of Ca.exico when they overheard a scanner broadcast of a house fire within the city Officers Rodriguez and Cardenas responded to the scene to observe Calexico Police Sergeant Gonzalo Gerardo had been overcome by smoke. Sergeant Gerardo advised the CHP officers that a male adult and fema.e chi d were in the residence. Smoke was bi owing out of all sides of the residence and Officer Rodriguez climbed into the bedroom window while Officer Cardenas i uminated the bedroom with his flash ight. Officer Rodriguez made severa attempts to pu the chi d, Ms Lisa Ramirez, from the bedroom but each time she fell from his grasp. Officer Rodriguez was being overcome by smoke and had to be pulled from the burning residence, to safety, by Officer Cardenas. Fire Captain Art Navarro climbed into the bedroom with the assistance of Officers Rodriguez and Cardenas and pulled Ms Ramirez to the window into the arms of the CHP officers Officers Rodriguez and Cardenas helped Calexico Police Officer E Romo carry the gir to the front yard Officer Rodriguez bent down to a ow the firefighters to step on his back to gain entry By this time the smoke was so thick that the fire crew was unab e to see the adu t victim, Mr Johnny Urena, on the floor in the bedroom. Officers Rodriguez and Cardenas illuminated the interior and directed the fire crew, by voice command to Mr Urena's body. The fire crew handed Mr Urena through the window to Officers Rodriguez and Cardenas, who carried him to the front yard for advanced lifesaving treatment. Although Mr. Johnny Urena and Mr. Daniel Ramirez, Sr , perished in the fire, Ms. Lisa Ramirez, Ms. Ana Ramirez, and Mr. Daniel Ramirez, Jr., was saved.

Luis Cardenas

Parole Agent I

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

12/28/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 28, 2020, at approximately 1:00 p.m., Parole Agent I Luis Cardenas was on duty attempting to find a parolee whose whereabouts were unknown. Upon arrival at the parolee's last known location, Agent Cardenas heard gunshots coming from a nearby Walmart and rushed to the scene. After observing many people running from the store in fear, he immediately radioed for law enforcement and approached the entrance. Agent Cardenas saw a man with a gun standing in front of the store, drew his state-issued firearm and ordered him to drop his weapon. The man complied, explaining the actual shooter had dropped the gun before entering the store. After securing the weapon, Agent Cardenas put the safety of customers and employees ahead of his own and entered the store. A frantic employee pointed out the shooter. Agent Cardenas approached the suspect who immediately surrendered. Agent Cardenas kept the suspect at gunpoint until local law enforcement officers arrived and remained at the scene while officers secured the building. Through his quick thinking, situational awareness and law enforcement training, Agent Cardenas kept over 100 community members safe that day. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to now-retired California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Parole Agent I Luis Cardenas for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Harold A. Carling

Fish and Game Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

12/23/1964

Special Act Award (Gold)

Working together during the major 1964 December floods, Haro d A. Carling and Charles L. Monroe .ashed together three small boats to cross and re-cross the Ee River at Ferndale to rescue several stranded people. Huge logs, trees, entire houses and other debris constantly threatened the barely maneuverab e boat.

Paul Carlos

Firefighter

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/20/2000

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Jeff Hawkins, Firefighters Joe Saunders, and Paul Carlos on, September 20, 2000, performed an act of heroism at risk to their personal safety by entering a victim's home to save a civilian. At approximately 1:00 p.m., on September 19th, 2000, a wildfire started west of Concow Road, north of the Concow School and approximately 15 miles north of Oroville. The fire continued to spread after burning 800 acres and scorching two residences. Shortly after 2:20 a.m., on September 20th, 2000, Fire Captain Hawkins with Firefighters Joe Saunders and Paul Carlos from Engine 72 were checking two residents on Stagecoach Lane about 4 miles south of Nelson Bar Road. After about 10 minutes, Captain Hawkins noticed the wind began to blow toward them and smoke was blowing over their heads and he noticed a firebrand ignited in the star thistle about 100 feet ahead of Engine 72. The firefighters pulled a hose line, but the fire grew in intensity and placed them all in danger. Captain Hawkins disengaged the pump, repositioned Engine 72, noticed there were multiple spot fires ahead and behind them, and radioed for help. The main fire was rapidly burning toward a home on Stagecoach Lane and Captain Hawkins became concerned for the two residents at the end of the lane because he felt they were trapped. Engine 71 drove south on Stagecoach Lane toward Engine 72. Fire Captain Sanford from Engine 71 radioed Captain Hawkins that he would go to the first house and attempt to protect it. Engine 72 had to abandon the hose line, move Engine 72 to the driveway of the first house and found the mobile home occupants Ray and Richard McCarty attempting to save their residence. Fire Captain Hawkins knew Engine 72 must evacuate the McCarty's because the smoke and fire conditions were very serious around the residence. The wildfire was rapidly approaching from the east driven by strong northeast wind. Without regard for their own lives, the personnel of Engine 72 placed Ray and Richard McCarty into the cab of Engine 72, drove them through blinding smoke and flames engulfing the engine to a safer location near Stagecoach Lane and Nelson Bar Road.

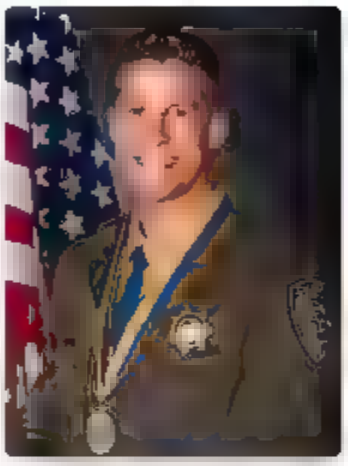
Tyler Carlton

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/4/2012

Special Service Award (Silver)



On September 4, 2012, at approximately 8:20 a.m., California Highway Patrol Officer Tyler Carlton was behind a jeep in heavy traffic on Interstate 680 in Alamo, preparing to initiate a traffic stop. His partner, Kenyon Youngstrom, was standing along the right shoulder just ahead, clearing a hazard from the lanes. Officer Carlton radioed Officer Youngstrom that he was approaching and intended to make an enforcement stop. When Officer Youngstrom saw the jeep, he directed the driver to pull over to the right shoulder and the driver complied. As Officer Youngstrom approached the driver's window to make contact, Officer Carlton pulled in behind and got out of his patrol vehicle. After a short conversation with Officer Youngstrom, the driver suddenly reached behind the right front seat, pulled out a handgun, and shot him. Officer Youngstrom fell to the ground into the traffic lane. Officer Carlton witnessed the attack and fired several rounds at the driver as he moved towards his severely injured partner. Traffic came to a grinding halt as Officer Carlton vigorously performed CPR and rescue breathing in an attempt to save his partner's life.

Officer Youngstrom was transported to a medical center and placed on life support. Regrettably, he succumbed to his injuries the next day, however, due to Officer Carlton's heroic lifesavings efforts, Officer Youngstrom's family was able to gather by his side and say good-bye. And per his wishes, Officer Youngstrom's organs were donated to seven recipients, ultimately saving their lives.

Broderick Carmichael

Electrician II

Department of Transportation

3/16/2017

Special Service Award (Silver)

On March 16, 2017, at approximately 11:00 a.m., California Department of Transportation Electrician II Broderick Carmichael and his colleague were replacing a damaged traffic signal at a busy intersection in Hermosa Beach, California. As they were completing their work and waiting to cross the street, they heard a loud crash as two cars collided. Mr. Carmichael was facing the intersection, while his colleague had her back to the treacherous scene that was rapidly unfolding behind her. She could not see that the impact propelled one of the vehicles into a chaotic spin toward the very spot where she was standing. Instead of quickly getting himself out of harm's way, his instinct was to protect her at all costs. The car jumped the curb, and Mr. Carmichael lunged for her. Although the car struck her, he was able to pull her to safety. She fell into his arms, unresponsive and dazed by the impact. The car came to rest in the median, in the same spot where she stood waiting to cross moments before. He helped her up and guided her to their work truck, catching her as she fainted on the way and called 911. She suffered injuries to her hip and foot, however without Mr. Carmichael's heroic intervention, her injuries would likely have been far worse, if not fatal. With no regard for his own safety, Mr. Carmichael went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation Electrician II Broderick Carmichael

Michael A. Carr

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

1/10/1995

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 10, 1995, CDF Fire Captain Michael A. Carr and Firefighter I Flint F. Oliver performed extraordinary acts of heroism at great personal risk to their own safety and lives. During a 100-year-flood, they rescued three victims (one disabled and one nonswimmer) trapped in a van submerged in a raging current of water runoff. At approximately 1609 hours, Captain Carr, along with Firefighter Oliver and several volunteer firefighters, arrived at the scene. Along with the three victims, the water contained an animal carcass, a propane tank, septic effluence, garbage, and other floating debris. Everyone was amazed the van stopped where it did instead of moving on to the North Fork of Honcut Creek. Captain Carr was trained in water rescue and knew rescues of the sort were only attempted with specialized equipment and specially trained personnel. He also knew this could very easily turn into a body recovery if they waited any longer for help. He assumed command and improvised the rescue with a canoe borrowed from a bystander. While Captain Carr wore a wet suit, water-rescue helmet, and personal flotation devise, Firefighter Oliver had only his work uniform, tennis shoes, and a personal flotation device. When the men waded out to the van, it was two hours since the victims were stranded. The shore crew loaded up a portable stretcher, webbing, life line, and other water rescue equipment into the canoe. Oliver waded back for the canoe and then took it out to the van where they attempted to secure it. Captain Carr called Gary Sanders and Dawn Osbourne out to steady the canoe so they could load the victims. Carr and Oliver assisted the victims, one at a time, into the canoe, and floated them to safety. Getting one victim out was particularly difficult as she was in second stage hypothermia, lethargic, nonresponsive, on the verge of unconsciousness, and completely unable to help.

Mike Carr

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/6/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 6th, 2001 as the Poe Fire incident quickly consumed over four thousand acres, Fire Captain Carr, assigned to Red Eye Road as Red Eye Structure Group along with his group of three teams and two single resource dozers performed heroically saving numerous homes in dangerous, poorly designed subdivisions throughout the fire area. As winds increased to 30+ mph and humidity fell as low as 7%, the fire front hit the Pine Brae area hard and at least five structures were burning. Shortly thereafter, ridge top winds suddenly spilled over increasing the fire's spread. Advised by an engine crew that a resident that they believed was in danger remained at a structure that was partially involved by fire, Fire Captain Carr drove to the location of the home where he observed a citizen taking refuge up hill from his burning home. Fire Captain Carr spent several minutes convincing the citizen that he needed to leave. Having little success, Fire Captain Carr finally told the citizen he would most likely die if he remained. The citizen agreed to leave but insisted on driving his own vehicle. Fire Captain Carr felt there was little time left for either of them and told the citizen to follow him out in his personal pick-up truck. Fire Captain Carr led the way out of the danger area encountering heavy fire and poor visibility along the way. As they progressed, Fire Captain Carr made the decision to hold in place and to allow the fire to burn down instead of attempting to drive through the poor visibility and heavy fire. Suddenly Fire Captain Carr noticed the citizen was maneuvering his vehicle in an attempt to get around his vehicle. Fire Captain Carr urged the citizen to stay put but he ignored this direction and proceeded to drive around

Fire Captain Carr and in to heavy smoke and fire. Fire Captain Carr opted to follow the citizen so he could affect another rescue if needed. However, luck was on the side of the citizen and several minutes later he made it to Yankee Hill Road and Hwy 70 and out of harm's way. Nonetheless, if Fire Captain Carr had not put his own life at great risk to go back into a firestorm, a firestorm that an engine company had chosen to leave, and save the life of the citizen, there is no doubt that the citizen would have stayed with his residence and perished.

Alfred Carrizosa

EDD Program Representative

Employment Development Department

3/25/1981

Special Act Award (Gold)

Emp oyment Program Representatives Alfred Carrizosa and Howard Swafford were returning from an out-of-town business trip when they spotted a sma car with severa youths inside stalled in the fast ine on Highway 91 near Corona. Without hesitation they pu ed their car off the highway, ran back to route traffic around the vehicle, but it was too ate Before Mr Carrizosa and Mr Swafford could get there, another vehic e plowed into the rear of the disabled car Its gas tank exp oded, engulfing the car in a ball of flames Mr Swafford, a World War II veteran suffering more than a 30 percent disabi ity, did not falter He ran to the driver's side of the flaming car and pulled out a teenage girl, her hair and clothes afire Carrying her to safety, Mr Swafford rolled her on the ground to extinguish the flames With his bare hands he patted the fire out in her hair Meanwhile Mr. Carrizosa, a Vietnam War veteran, ran to the passenger side and pulled a second youth to safety He ran back to help a third teenage girl through the window. A fourth youth, a boy, managed to escape unassisted The girls were hospitalized with second and third degree burns over 15 to 35 percent of their body, but they survived. Mr. Swafford suffered second degree burns on his right foot, left knee, hands and head in addition to numerous cuts and abrasions.

Steve Carroll

Caltrans Maintenance Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

1/20/2004

Special Service Award (Silver)

On January 20, 2004 California Department of Transportation employees Jonathan B Bevan, Steve Carroll, Keith A Laub and Henry Harden performed acts of heroism at risk to their personal safety when they prevented an occupied vehicle from plummeting over a snowy mountain cliff At 2 10 P.M , an SUV hit a patch of icy roadway south of Big Bear on State Highway 38 and spun off the highway near Onyx Summit The vehicle landed on its side and was perched precariously against a tree on a slope - about 800 feet above the canyon with the engine still running, the tires still spinning, and the driver helplessly trapped inside. A retired Los Angeles police detective witnessed the accident and flagged down a Caltrans vehicle driven by Henry Harden. With the SUV slowly slipping down the mountainside, Mr Harden immediately radioed for help Within minutes a Caltrans snowplow driven by Keith Laub arrived. Soon thereafter, Jonathan Bevan and Steve Carroll arrived on the scene. Jonathan Bevan and Steve Carroll provided the safety zone for Mr. Harden and Mr. Laub to work at securing the overturned vehicle to keep it from plummeting into the canyon. The situation was very dangerous, another vehicle lost control on the icy road and crashed within 15 feet of the snowplows Mr Bevan and Mr. Carroll marked off the area with flares and began a flagging operation to control traffic and ensure that emergency vehicles could gain access. They moved onlookers to a safe area and, to give vehicles more traction, applied cinders to the roadway Meanwhile, at 8500 feet, with snow falling, Mr Laub took a chain from the snowplow, climbed down the dangerously steep and icy slope, attached the chain to the SUV's axle and secured the other end to one of the Caltrans snowplows. Mr. Harden then climbed down the steep, icy incline, attached another chain to the SUV and secured the other end to a second snowplow. To stabilize the SUV, the snowplows were then positioned to draw the chains into a taut "V" Understandably the SUV's driver was visibly relieved They monitored the vehicle and the driver until rescue crews arrived. Emergency personnel then pried the door open and carried the driver to safety, who was taken to a nearby hospital for evaluation and released the same day. Without a thought to their own personal safety, Mr Bevan, Mr Carroll, Mr Harden and Mr Laub assisted in the rescue effort that saved the driver's life

Nedra Cartwright-May

Manager I

Department of Motor Vehicles

2/18/2011

Special Service Award (Silver)

On February 18, 2011, at approximately 12 30 p m , a Hollywood DMV employee was helping a female customer renew her driver's license. The customer was given a temporary license and advised that the actual license would be mailed to the address she provided on the application. When she heard this, the woman became infuriated, banged the counter with her fist, and stormed away As she approached the building exit, she suddenly grabbed an innocent woman by the hair and started punching her in the face. The victim was waiting for her husband who was taking a test and just happened to be sitting near the exit. Lobby employees notified Manager I, Nedra Cartwright-May Ms Cartwright-May immediately responded and pulled the woman off the victim Ms Cartwright-May took the woman's car keys as she attempted to leave the building, and contained her until the Los Angeles Police Department arrived and arrested her for battery Witnesses at the scene said they did not intervene because they thought the woman might have a gun or a knife.

Russell D. Carver

Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/12/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Russell D. Carver, on January 12, 2004, performed an act of heroism at risk to his personal safety while rescuing a victim from a burning vehicle. At 9:24 a.m., Mr. David Bush, age 51, of Freemont, Ca, was driving his 1992 Buick Century south on US-101, approaching the Ventura River Bridge north of the city of Ventura. Mr. Bush lost control of his vehicle at which time it left the roadway and careened down the embankment bordering the shoulder of the roadway. The front of the car impacted a large boulder and the car immediately overturned. The vehicle caught fire and the surrounding brush and bamboo from the river bottom also ignited. Officer Carver responded to the scene and arrived within one minute. Officer Carver climbed down to the burning vehicle and attempted to extinguish the fire. When it became apparent that the fire was out-of-control, Officer Carver broke out the driver's side window with his baton. Mr. Bush, 6 foot 3 inched tall, weighting 300 pounds, was trapped inside and was hanging upside-down restrained by his seatbelt. He was unable to release the latch and told Officer Carver he could not free himself. The front of the vehicle was now fully engulfed and the flames were entering the passenger compartment. Officer Carver was able to cut the shoulder strap, as well as the lap belt and pull Mr. Bush free only seconds before the entire passenger compartment erupted in flames. Officer Carver pulled the injured driver to safety and rendered assistance until the arrival of emergency services personnel. Mr. Bush was transported to Ventura County Medical Center by ambulance and admitted for treatment and observation. Had Officer Carver been unwilling to place himself in jeopardy, Mr. Bush would have burned to death. Officer Carver's selfless act clearly saved a life, at great risk to himself.

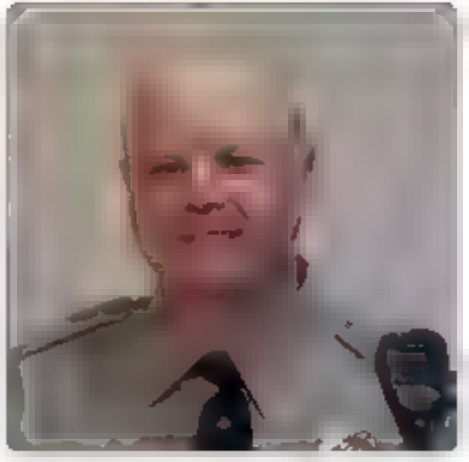
Todd Carver

El Dorado County Sheriff's Office, Deputy

Other

6/5/2007

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor



On June 5, 2007, Deputy Todd Carver responded to a report of shots fired. The suspect, who was heavily armed, shot and killed his father, injured three deputies and a sheriff's K-9. Deputy Carver came face to face with the suspect moments after the suspect shot the three deputies. Deputy Carver gave the suspect a verbal command to surrender, after which the suspect fired a shot at Carver, narrowly missing him. Deputy Carver returned fire, stopping the suspect from injuring or killing more innocent people.

Matthew Casey

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/13/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 13, 2008 California Highway Patrol Officer Matthew Casey, arrived at the scene of a solo vehicle-versus-tree accident involving a wrong way driver in Mendocino County. Off-duty CalFire Battalion Chief, Corey Call, was on scene and attempting to aid the victim. The female driver was still seated behind the wheel, and was alive, but unresponsive. The car began to catch fire and smoke was filling the passenger compartment. Officer Casey tried to put out the fire with his fire extinguisher but was unsuccessful. Unable to open the doors, Officer Casey used his baton to break the passenger side window, allowing him to reach inside and open the passenger door. As Officer Casey entered the car's passenger compartment, he was met with a wall of heat and smoke. As he drew his first breath inside the car, heat and smoke entered his lungs causing his trachea to automatically close making it impossible for him to breathe. Officer Casey had to consciously force himself to relax and avoid the urge to panic until his trachea reopened. Because he stayed calm and concentrated, he was able to overcome the effects of the smoke and continue his efforts to remove the driver. Despite great danger to themselves, Officer Casey and Chief Call struggled for nearly five minutes to save the woman, but the intense flames and smoke eventually forced Officer Casey and Chief Call to abandon their efforts. In spite of Officer Casey's heroic efforts, the woman could not be saved, but his actions clearly exemplify his courage and resourcefulness under extremely dangerous conditions.

Karla Castro

Senior Legal Typist

Department of Industrial Relations

9/15/2021

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the morning of September 15, 2021, a Department of Industrial Relations employee gasped out and collapsed in the middle of her office space. The victim's colleagues leapt into action. Senior Legal Typist Karla Castro began chest compressions and administering CPR. Senior Legal Typist Cristi Valencia then took over to administer chest compressions and CPR. Following Ms. Valencia, Senior Legal Typist Camille Morgan took a turn to administer chest compressions and CPR. Additional staff comforted the employee, called the police, and retrieved the AED machine. As paramedics arrived, and after forty harrowing minutes of attempting to rescue the employee, the employee passed away. With no regard for her own safety, Senior Legal Typist Castro went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Industrial Relations Senior Legal Typist Karla Castro.

Matthew P. Causie

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/2/1989

Special Service Award (Silver)

On May 2, 1989, at approximately 12:45 a.m., Officer Matthew P Causie and his partner responded to a report of an accident in which a vehicle careened off U S Highway 101 and down a rock embankment into the ocean After locating the vehicle, Officer Causie saw that the automobile was relatively intact, but was unstable, continually being slammed back and forth against the rocks by two and three foot waves. Officer Causie immediately assessed the area but due to the darkness and the conditions of the surf , he was unable to determine if the driver or any passengers were still trapped inside. Although the danger to Officer Causie was readily apparent, he stripped his belt, shirt and protective vest, and climbed down the wet and slippery rocks toward the car. Rather than take the time to remove additional clothing or don a personal flotation device, Officer Causie entered the heavy surf without hesitation to check the vehicle for possible survivors. His footing was continually threatened by the force of the waves and the movement of the automobile Since he was unsuccessful in his attempt to climb into the vehicle, Officer Causie obtained his baton, climbed back down the rocks into the surf and immediately proceeded to break the side window of the vehicle He probed the interior of the car for possible survivors, but found that the vehicle was empty. An eyewitness reported that had someone been in the vehicle, they could not have survived the heavy surf and cold water for long.

Jerardo Chamalbide

Fresno, Police Sergent

Other

2/20/2007

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On Febrary 20, 2007, the anual Mardi Gras celebration in the Tower District was disrupted when a gunman shot and seriously injured a motorcycle officer. Officer Gil Holguin initiated a traffic stop with an individual, 23 years old, for driving in the wrong direction. The individual exited his vehicle and shot Officer Holguin and an innocent woman. Officer Holguin radioed for help, as the individual fled the scene. Officers, alerted by Officer Gil Holguin broadcast, spotted the individual's vehicle and began a pursuit. Sergeant Chamalbide positioned his patrol car directly behind the individual's vehicle. During the pursuit, the individual stopped his vehicle several times, angling it to allow a clear shot at pursuing officers. Each time he fired multiple rounds. One round penetrated Sergeant Chamalbide's windshield and grazed the tope right-side of his head. With blood running down the side of his face, Sergeant Chamalbide continued to pursue the individual. During the pursuit, the individual also shot Officer Raphael Davis. Less than ten minuets, and four miles, after the pursuit began, the individual stopped his vehicle. Sergeant Chamalbide rammed his patrol car into the individual's vehicle. The individual opened the driver's door and ignored officers' commands to show his hands. Fearing for their own safety and that of the public, officers were forced to fire at the individual, ultimately killing him. Because of his selfless actions and bravery in the face of mortal danger in pursuit of this suspect, Sergeant Chamalbide received the 2007 Governor's Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor.

Zackery Chambers

State Park Peace Officer

Department of Parks and Recreation

11/9/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of November 9, 2018, State Park Peace Officers Christopher Beehner and Zackery Chambers were called in to respond to the Camp Fire in Butte County. Within minutes of responding, Officer Chambers was partnered with a U.S. Forest Service officer and helped stop northbound traffic on Pentz Road. The sky was black and the roadway was lit by flames and his headlights. On Pearson Road, Officer Chambers encountered more flames, downed lines and trees. He was quickly surrounded by fire and embers blew into his vehicle. As a firefighter was leaving the area, he told Officer Chambers, "you're not going to make it, and, if we don't leave, we are going to die." However, Officer Chambers continued to help evacuate homes off of DeMille Road with the fire again surrounding him. He helped evacuate an elderly couple and their pets from the front of their residence while the back of their home was already on fire. As they were leaving, there were flames on both sides of the road and they had to drive through the flames, hoping the vehicle did not catch on fire. The whole time Officer Chambers was working he worried about his wife. He had told her she would be safe going to work in Paradise, but he never imagined the fire would move so quickly. With the phones down, he was unable to find out if his wife was safe until hours later. Thankfully, she was able to safely make it out of Paradise. Officer Chambers was then assigned to evacuate Yankee Hill. At the time, he believed the fire was going in the opposite direction. However, soon after the area was evacuated, it was on fire. Meanwhile, Officer Beehner helped evacuate homes in Paradise and Concow while the fire raged. Officers Beehner and Chambers next went to help evacuate Magalia. They met a group of Butte County Sheriff deputies in Magalia doing evacuations, but shortly after their arrival, the fire threatened to cut off all the routes out of Magalia. All of the deputies evacuated the area but Officers Beehner and Chambers stayed in Magalia to evacuate as many people as they could, in spite of the risk of being trapped by the fire. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Chambers went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Parks and Recreation State Park Peace Officer Zackery Chambers

Raymond Chaney

Battalion Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

10/26/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 26, 2004, CDF Battalion Chief Raymond Chaney performed an act of heroism, risking his own personal safety when the Cedar Fire spread rapidly from the San Diego River watershed southwesterly into the San Diego Country Estates. Realizing the significant threat to human life, he drove through a series of flame fronts to the Barona Ranch Canyon Casino and Resort to warn people of the fast approaching fire and its imminent danger. Upon arrival, Battalion Chief Chaney recognized the fire was moving faster than the combined evacuation force of San Diego County Sheriff's deputies and state, federal, and local firefighters could respond. Observing that the entire Barona Indian Reservation was about to burn, Battalion Chief Chaney positioned his limited resources to defend the casino and resort. People were in a state of panic as the fire approached and many were attempting to leave the casino and resort in vehicles There were 600-800 people at the casino as the fire approached Hundreds of people would have been trapped on the road and overcome by the heat and flames if they had attempted to flee. Battalion Chief Chaney coordinated a massive rescue, instructing the casino manager to direct patrons and employees to a place of shelter, while his strike team of engines protected the casino from the fire

Mark Chapman

Detective

Other

2/5/2010

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

Homicide detectives from the Fresno County Sheriff's Office, including safety personnel from allied agencies in the town of Minkler, attempted to serve a search warrant. The search warrant team, comprised of Detectives Mark Chapman, Mark Eaton, Joe Wahlenmaier and Robert McEwen, approached the house. The other personnel surrounded the perimeter of the home. The team knocked and announced their presence, and demanded entry several times. The team then broke down an exterior porch door to gain entry, however, they discovered another locked door. Detectives again announced their presence and demanded entry, yet the suspect refused. As Detective Wahlenmaier hit the door with a ram, the suspect, who was lying-in-wait, began shooting through the closed door. Detective Wahlenmaier was shot and immediately collapsed. Detective McEwen instinctively covered Detective Wahlenmaier with his own body, to protect him from further harm. As the gun battle ensued, Sergeant Lopez and Detective Toscano attempted for several minutes to pull Detective Wahlenmaier from the porch, however, his equipment caught on the door frame. Deputy Harris returned cover fire, allowing other deputies to free Detective Wahlenmaier while the gunfire continued. Deputy Harris sustained an injury to his right eye and the right side of his face from a fragmented bullet fired by the suspect. Deputy Harris continued to return cover fire. As the gun battle continued, it was learned that Fresno County Sheriff's Detective Wahlenmaier was mortally wounded. An additional tragedy was the loss of Reedley Police Officer Javier Bejar who was shot and killed by the suspect while aiding sheriff deputies, as you will hear in the next citation. The standoff ultimately ended when the suspect took his own life.

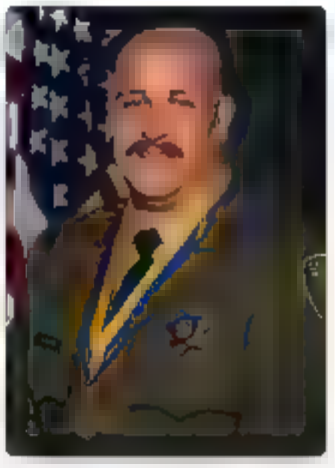
Sergio Chavez

Correctoinal Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

5/24/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)



On May 24, 2017, at 10:20 a.m., in the Pelican Bay State Prison outdoor exercise yard, with approximate y three hundred inmates, a one-on-one fight started Correctional officers responded to the fight to stop the incident. While responding staff were attempting to quell the incident, approximately 130 inmates began rushing and attacking the officers Officer Sergio Chavez ran to the aid of an officer who was on the ground, getting badly beaten by a large group of inmates. Officer Chavez engaged this group of inmates with his baton. Many of the inmates immediately turned their attack on Officer Chavez In his attempt to save his fellow officer's life, he allowed the inmates to turn on him. Officer Chavez was quickly overwhelmed by the large group of inmates and one of the inmates punched Officer Chavez in the face, breaking his nose Officer Chavez was struck many more times ultimately knocking him to the ground. While on the ground multiple inmates were kicking him in the face, head and torso while others were trying to get his baton away from him. Officer Chavez was able to retain his baton and was soon escorted off the yard by other staff members Officer Chavez put his own life in danger by immediately responding to help another officer. Because Officer Chavez responded and utilized force, drawing the attention away from the officer on the ground, he helped save that officer's life. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Chavez's heroic act saved the lives of fellow officers and inmates in the face of a large prison fight. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctional Officer Sergio Chavez.

Robert L. Chesnick

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/30/2012

Special Service Award (Silver)

On June 30, 2012, at approximately 8:00 p.m., Fire Captain Robert L. Chesnick was off work and traveling on Highway 89 near the town of McCloud, when he saw headlights off to the side of the highway. Stopping to investigate, he found a truck had gone off the road and crashed into a tree. The engine was still running and the driver was unconscious, his head bleeding profusely. Captain Chesnick called for assistance and noticed smoke coming from under the truck. After quickly assessing the driver for neck injuries, he heard a loud "whoosh!" as the gas in the truck ignited, sending flames between the bed and the cab. Captain Chesnick pulled the man from the burning truck and dragged him about 15 feet away from the vehicle. The local fire captain arrived on the scene and the two began administering first aid when the truck became fully engulfed in flames, and .22 caliber bullets that had been stored in the truck, suddenly began discharging. The victim was transported to a local hospital and treated for severe lacerations on his face and neck.

Thomas Christian

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/28/1991

Special Service Award (Silver)

State Traffic Officer Thomas Christian, on May 28, 1991, performed an extraordinary act of heroism performed at great personal risk to his own safety and life, by assisting in the rescue of an unconscious driver from a burning vehicle. At approximately 9:46 a.m., Officer Christian witnessed a traffic collision involving a vehicle which became engulfed in flames. Officer Christian, upon exhausting the fire extinguisher, attempted to enter the burning vehicle. Officer Christian noticed the driver of the vehicle could not be removed from the driver's side of the car, so he ran to the passenger side of the vehicle. The fire was entering the interior of the vehicle. The unconscious driver was pinned in the car by the crushed-in dash. Officer Christian entered the burning vehicle from the passenger side and began pulling up on the dash and steering wheel in an attempt to free the victim's legs. By this time, the victim's legs appeared to be burning. Despite the ever present danger, the driver was pulled from the vehicle to safety by the assistance of Officer Christian and other witnesses.

Herbert D. Christie

Fish and Game Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

12/22/1964

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 22, 1964, during the height of the Northern Ca ifornia December 1964 floods, Fish and Game Warden Herbert D. Christie took his small boat time and again to rescue two people at a time - 15 peop e and three dogs from the raging flood waters. The Ee River was 20 feet above flood stage and the wind ve ocity was estimated at 30 knots.

Adam Christin

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/30/1986

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 29, 1986, California Highway Patrol Officers Adam Christin and Guillermo Godinez rescued a man trapped inside a pickup truck that had caught fire after crashing into a barrier on the San Diego Freeway The truck exploded shortly after they dragged him from the cab. Officer Christin endangered his personal safety and risked his life in order to save the life of a helpless victim. The quick and selfless actions of Officer Christin were above and beyond the call and scope of duty

Josh Clark

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/21/2023

Special Service Award (Silver)

On February 21, 2023, the Santa Cruz Mountains were experiencing another winter storm in a season of consecutive atmospheric rivers. While this storm had less precipitation than previous ones, local winds were steady at 36 miles per hour, with gusts up to 50 miles per hour. Many trees in the area had been weakened by previous storms, and trees more than 100 feet tall were falling, damaging structures and making roadways impassable. CAL FIRE Engine 1760, staffed by Fire Captain Josh Clark and Fire Fighter IIs Kyle Callaway and Kenneth Ellis were asked to assist the neighboring Boulder Creek Fire Department with a report of a tree that had fallen onto a house and trapped a victim inside. Engine 1760 and Boulder Creek Fire units arrived at the residence that was badly damaged. The top of a redwood tree that was over 10 feet in length and 12 inches in diameter had broken off and fallen through the roof of the home and continued through the floor, trapping a young toddler underneath. The toddler's pelvis was pinned between the tree and the badly damaged floor. Trees and other debris continued to fall from unknown directions all around, threatening the rescuers' lives. Captain Clark, Firefighters Callaway and Ellis and the Boulder Creek firefighters worked from the rooftop and inside the home to stabilize the structure's roof and floor and remove the tree while also monitoring the toddler. The toddler was fading in and out of consciousness and his condition continued to deteriorate. The crew decided to free him before the entire tree could be removed, which presented a particularly technical challenge. They had to relieve the log's weight from the toddler while preventing the roof from caving in. In an effort that can only be described as brute strength, Firefighters Callaway and Ellis lifted the remaining tree section just enough for another firefighter to pull the toddler out from underneath. Due to the weather conditions and rapid wind gusts, a helicopter air ambulance was not able to respond, so the toddler was escorted by firefighters, paramedics and sheriff deputies to a trauma center where he underwent multiple surgeries for associated injuries. Fire Captain Clark, Firefighters Callaway and Ellis and the Boulder Creek Fire Department displayed instinctual courage in this dynamic and hazardous environment. The toddler's dad shared, "If everybody wasn't doing their job, I don't know if he'd be alive or not." The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire Captain Josh Clark for his heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty

Lee R. Clark

State Park Ranger

Department of Parks and Recreation

6/15/1976

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 15, 1976, during the early morning hours, Rangers Lee R. Clark, Daniel E. Scott and Keith R. Williams were preparing to dive for abalone along the rocky cliffs of the Mendocino shoreline when they heard calls for help coming from about a quarter of a mile out at sea. Three survivors of a capsized boat were clinging desperately to the overturned craft and a nearby rock as the cold waves tossed them around, draining their fast ebbing strength. Quickly getting into their wet suits, the three men dispatched Ranger Williams's brother to get help and then they started the long arduous swim. The rangers, though not trained as lifeguards and very much aware of the hazards of the rough, cold water and rocks, swam out to rescue the men. One had a severe heart condition. With concentrated effort, the three rangers systematically brought the victims to shore, using their wet suits to supply a degree of warmth to the chilled victims. On shore, the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office was waiting with ambulances to transport the victims to the hospital.

William "Bill" R. Clayton

Assistant Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/1/1997

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 1, 1997, CDF Assistant Chief Bill Clayton and Battalion Chief Jack Story performed extraordinary acts of heroism at great risk to their personal safety and lives. Chiefs Clayton and Story responded to the Lake Wohlford Fire and drove through a fire storm to rescue the Melvin family from certain peril. At approximately 1:00 p.m. on August 1, 1997, Chief Clayton, Incident Commander (I.C.) for his fire, along with Chief Story responded to the arson fire at Lake Wohlford. The fire spread rapidly through heavy brush and up steep canyons, threatening numerous civilians and their property. The fire destroyed 11 dwellings, 20-30 other structures and approximately 30 vehicles. After a quick perusal of the area, it was discovered by I.C. Clayton that several property owners needed to be evacuated immediately. I.C. Clayton was notified by a civilian, Cindy Poe, that the Melvin family was still trapped in the fire area. By this time the fire had developed into a fire storm with flames in excess of 50 feet high. I.C. Clayton ordered Chief Story to lead a rescue attempt to save the Melvin family. Civilian Cindy Poe, who knew the location of the Melvin family, was placed in Chief Story's vehicle. I.C. Clayton, Chief Story, Cindy Poe, Captain Clay Howe (BLM), Engine 3381 and crew members Fire Captain Mike Newell, Firefighter Andy McDaniel and Firefighter Lynne Lenell headed into the fire storm. Burning and arcing power lines fell and struck the side of I.C. Clayton's sedan. Flames and smoke conditions obscured the road bringing visibility to zero, which presented an immediate life-threating situation. Direct are drops were ordered on the three vehicles, but had little effect due to poor visibility and turbulent wind conditions. The rescue team reached the Melvin family just before the fire reached their location. They were placed in I.C. Clayton's vehicle and driving back through a second wall of fire to safety. Despite perilous conditions and the possibility of being swept into the fire store, the actions of Chief Bill Clayton and Chief Jack Story stand as testimony to the quality and courage of the everyday CDF firefighter.

William "Bill" R. Clayton

Division Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

10/26/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 26, 2003, CDF Chief William R. Clayton performed acts of heroism by risking his own personal safety when he took part in rescuing a civilian from certain death, and then defending the patrons of Valley View Casino from a firestorm. Captain Clayton received a urgent call from the dispatch center that a firestorm was bearing down on the Valley View Casino and that 180-200 patrons were trapped inside. Chief Clayton and retired Sheriff Deputy Larry Natwick proceeded rapidly toward the casino, driving through several fire fronts with no visibility and driving over and under downed and arcing power lines. During this time, Chief Clayton facilitated the rescue of a civilian who was running down the road and about to be overtaken by a 30-foot wall of flames. By the time Captain Clayton arrived at the 45,000 square foot casino it was besieged by a firestorm and a 10,000 gallon propane tank was threatened by direct flames from a double wide trailer that was not totally engulfed. Chief Clayton conducted a scene size-up and directed arriving engines he had ordered to attack positions. Upon entering the casino, Chief Clayton encountered the 180-200 extremely frighten patrons. The casino was filled with smoke and was dark, lit only by emergency lighting. An injured and panic stricken horse, running wild in the casino, had kicked a severely burned man, knocking him to the floor; whereupon he suffered a heart attack. The area surrounding the casino was now totally engulfed in the firestorm, making any escape from the casino impossible. The fire breached the back wall of the casino and chief clayton directed an interior attack by Engine 273, which was successful and prevented the destruction of the casino.

Grant Clemens

Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/9/1987

Special Act Award (Gold)

Traffic Officer Grant Clemens pulled a man to safety who was trapped in a burning vehicle on the Santa Clara River Bridge near Ventura. The vehicle was one of two fully engulfed in flames when Officer Clemens reached the scene. He initially tried to enter through one of the doors, but that was unsuccessful, so he then broke the rear window with his baton and pulled the man to safety seconds before the car's interior was fully engulfed in flames. Officer Clemens sustained first and second degree burns during the rescue

Geoffrey Clute

Caltrans Bridge Maintenance Supervisor

Department of Transportation

7/7/2023

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 7, 2023, while Caltrans Bridge Maintenance Supervisor Geoffrey Clute was on his way home from work, he noticed an erratic driver behind him swerving through traffic, eventually veering from the #3 lane across the #4 lane, through the paved shoulder and down an embankment. Supervisor Clute called the dispatch center in Oakland and circled back around to check on the vehicle's occupants. Upon arrival, Supervisor Clute confirmed the vehicle went off the road at a high rate of speed, causing it to roll down a berm, hitting a tree before stopping on its side where the engine was now emitting smoke. Supervisor Clute grabbed his fire extinguisher and rushed down the embankment along with another two good Samaritans. They found the driver incoherent and hanging from his seat belt. Supervisor Clute emptied his fire extinguisher into the motor compartment, while the good Samaritans broke out the rear window. The fire grew in the motor compartment; meanwhile, the driver was still incoherent. This all happened quickly and emergency crews were not on the scene, nor could they be heard en route. Unconcerned for their own safety, Supervisor Clute and the good Samaritans started to kick in the windshield to gain access while the vehicle flames continued to engulf the engine compartment. Soon after, they were able to gain access to the interior of the car, Supervisor Clute crawled through the windshield opening and unlocked the driver's seatbelt. The still-incoherent driver fell to the bottom of the car. Supervisor Clute and the good Samaritans struggled to pull him from the wreck and were ultimately able to pull him out just in time as the vehicle became fully consumed in flames. The driver began to speak as emergency personnel arrived. Thankfully Supervisor Clute was not seriously injured, but he did receive minor burns on the tips of his fingers. When asked, "Why didn't you wait for the fire department?" Supervisor Clute responded, "I was not going to leave the driver in there to burn up! There was no way the fire department would have made it on time, and I wasn't leaving without him." Supervisor Clute embodies the caliber of employee we all wish to find – devoted, reliable, fair, hardworking and committed to leading by great example. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation, Caltrans Bridge Maintenance Supervisor Geoffrey Clute for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Lawrence Colby

Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/4/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 4, 2007, California Highway Patrol Officer Lawrence Colby was assisting fellow California Highway Patrolmen and the San Bernardino Police Department with a female juvenile attempting to jump from a bridge on the transition road of eastbound Interstate 10 to northbound Interstate 215 in the city of Colton. As the young woman made statements that she didn't want to live any more, she would release one of her hands from the bridge rail and one of her feet from the ledge she was standing on and arch backwards away from the bridge. It was clear to Officer Colby that the woman would jump if no intervention was attempted. Officer Colby positioned himself on the woman's blind side while officers negotiated with her. After 50 minutes of negotiations, the woman leaned backwards with the finger tips of one hand holding onto the bridge rail and one foot on the edge. Officer Colby lunged over the bridge railing and "bear hugged" the woman pulling her back onto the road, preventing her from death or serious injury.

Cody Collins

Caltrans Maintenance Area Superintendent

Department of Transportation

10/6/2022

Special Service Award (Silver)

On October 6, 2022, Caltrans Maintenance Area Superintendent Cody Collins and Transportation Engineering Technician Jeffrey Scardine were performing their duties as instructors at the Caltrans Bank Scaling and Rock-Climbing Course located near Kingvale, California. At approximately 1:00 p.m., they were alerted by the Lead Instructor of an emergency involving student climber, Kevin Lassiter. Faced with an urgent need to reach Mr. Lassiter in a potentially life-threatening condition, Mr. Scardine quickly climbed the slope and assessed the state of Mr. Lassiter. He provided aid and comfort and rapidly constructed a mechanical advantage system to release the climber from the rope and transfer him to Mr. Collins rope. Mr. Collins quickly ascended to the top of the slope to construct an independent rescue rope and rappelled to Mr. Lassiter. He transferred him to the rescue rope and safely rappelled them both to the ground while controlling the climbing equipment and keeping Mr. Lassiter in a secure position. Mr Collins and Mr. Scardine's actions resulted in the successful and swift rescue of the climber who required immediate emergency medical care. A helicopter was called, and he was subsequently air-lifted to the hospital where he underwent successful treatment. The staff at the hospital credited the fast response time as a major reason why they were able to save Mr. Lassiter. Mr. Collins pioneered the use of many of the techniques currently employed in the Caltrans climbing program and is regarded by his peers as a leader and innovator who provides continuous improvement to the program. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation Maintenance Area Superintendent Cody Collins for his act of heroism extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Joseph P. Collins

State Park Ranger

Department of Parks and Recreation

3/10/1981

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 10, 1981, State Park Ranger Joseph P Collins rescued a fisherman who fell from the rocks into extremely heavy surf near West Cliff Drive in Santa Cruz. After being flagged down by the fisherman's wife, Ranger Collins realized the immediate danger to the victim, he quickly grabbed a rescue tube from his vehicle and stripped down to work pants. After diving into the extremely cold water, he untangled the victim from his fishing line and moved him up the coast and away from the dangerous rocks. Ranger Collins swam approximately 500 yards to take the victim to a safe landing area. He was in the icy water for forty minutes

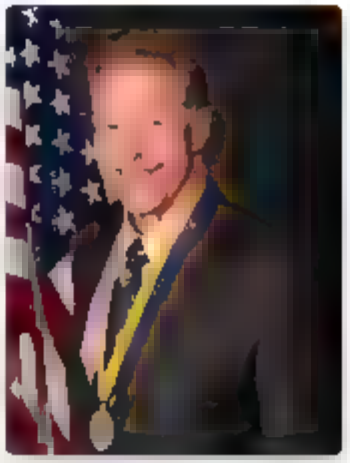
Gary Combes

Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

2/10/1996

Special Service Award (Silver)



On February 10, 1996, at approximately 12:30 p.m., Patrol Lieutenant Doug Huckins, Wardens Gary Combes and John Ewald, and a U. S. Coast Guard Petty Officer were patrolling the waters off the Santa Cruz coastline in their patrol boat "Bluefin", when they overheard a radio call describing a capsized boat approximately two and a half miles from their location. Multiple victims were reported to be in the water. Within 15 minutes the crew arrived to find an overturned boat in the surf line. Several people were in the frigid water, including two surfers who paddled out to assist the victims. The crew could see the surfers taking turns holding up four of the five victims. Despite being tossed around by waves as high as 12 feet, Lieutenant Huckins backed the Bluefin just off the surf line within a quarter mile of the beach. Wardens Combes and Ewald launched a rigid hull inflatable skiff and maneuvered into the surf-zone, riding the backs of the dangerous swells. Within minutes they rescued three of the exhausted victims from the 50-degree water and rushed them back to the Bluefin where they were given warm clothing as all were in advanced stages of hypothermia. The victims were airlifted from the patrol boat to a nearby hospital. Meanwhile, the two surfers managed to get another victim to shore, but sadly, the fifth victim drowned.

Alan L. Companey

Caltrans Maintenance Area Superintendent

Department of Transportation

6/18/2008

Special Service Award (Silver)

On June 18, 2008, at approximately 3:30 a.m., California Department of Transportation employees Alan L. Companey and Shawn Daniel Hussey responded to a call about a vehicle that had stopped on the Bay Bridge in a westbound lane just east of Treasure Island. Upon arrival, Mr. Hussey saw the car was empty and found a suicidal man had climbed over the bridge railing and was standing on a girder approximately 225 feet above the bay with a bag of rocks tied to one wrist. Mr. Hussey immediately requested assistance from the CHP. He then engaged the man in conversation until the CHP and additional support arrived, including the San Francisco Police Department's trained negotiator, water responders, ambulance, paramedics, and the United States Coast Guard. Mr. Companey and Mr. Hussey discussed rescue options and called for fall protection equipment to be delivered in case it was needed. Mr. Companey brought this equipment to the scene. The negotiator and allied team worked for two hours and eventually calmed the distraught man down enough to allow Mr. Hussey and Mr. Companey to climb over the rail. Mr. Hussey immediately grabbed the man, boosted him into Mr. Companey's arms and up into the hands of the negotiator and CHP Officers. Their actions helped save the life of the distraught man.

Kerry Comphel

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/26/2016

Special Service Award (Silver)

On Apri 26, 2016, at 9:19 p.m., Officer Kerry Comphe , was on patrol with his partner, Officer Jason Hughes, when they responded to a woman sitting with her legs hanging over the railing of an overpass bridge. As the officers approached the woman, she stood up on top of the bridge railing, so they stopped their approach and engaged her in conversation The officers were able to convince the woman to step down from the railing. They slowly moved closer to her while asking her to move away from the railing, but she backed away from them and began looking over the edge. Officer Hughes and his partner determined that the woman intended to jump and quickly coordinated a plan to stop her. The officers rushed towards her just as she jumped head first over the railing. As her body cleared the bridge railing, Officer Hughes grabbed onto her sweater and arm while Officer Comphel grabbed her other arm The woman actively fought against the officers and yelled at them to let her go Officers Comphel and Hughes struggled to bring her back over the railing as she hooked her feet to a freeway sign. Although both officers were at great risk of being pulled over the three foot high railing, they refused to let go as she dangled precariously above the road and vehicular traffic below Once additional backup arrived, everyone helped to bring the woman back over the bridge railing.

Mark Conner

Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/15/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Mark Conner, on October 15, 2003, performed an act of heroism at risk to his persona safety when he saved the life of a citizen who was being assaulted with a deadly weapon during an attempted carjacking. At 8:00 p m., Officer Conner exited westbound Interstate 10 at Tippecanoe Avenue, in the city of San Bernardino, and stopped for a red traffic light at the bottom of the off ramp Officer Conner was approached by Mr George Willoughby, who was the victim of a crime of theft which had just occurred at a gas station just north of the freeway Officer Conner was advised by Mr Willoughby that the suspect was armed with a handgun and that he had fired at him. The suspect continued to flee on foot in a southern direction on Tippecanoe Avenue Officer Conner saw the suspect walking in the parking lot of a nearby Del Taco restaurant and lost sight of him. Shortly thereafter Officer Conner saw the suspect cross the street in the direction of a Baker's restaurant on the opposite corner of the street Officer Conner pursued the suspect and stopped in the driveway of the Baker's restaurant Officer Conner observed the suspect pointing a handgun at Mr. Matthew Shanley through the opened driver's window of Mr Shanley's vehicle. Mr. Shanley was driving a pickup truck and had stopped in the drive-thru of the Baker's restaurant to order food Officer Conner exited his patrol vehicle and armed himself with his Smith & Wesson, 40 caliber pistol Officer Conner pointed his weapon towards the suspect and repeatedly ordered him to stop and raise his hands The suspect failed to comply with the officer's commands. A struggle for control of the gun between the suspect and Mr. Shanley ensued. The suspect and Mr Shanley fell to the ground and continued to battle for control of the gun Officer Conner moved from a position of cover and safety and advanced upon the suspect Fearing for his life, as well as for Mr. Shanley's life, Officer Conner discharged twelve rounds from his pistol striking the suspect. The suspect was subsequently transported to the hospital where he was pronounced dead

Shaun Conner, Jr.

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/3/2019

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 3, 2019 at approximately 12:59 a.m. California Highway Patrol Officer Shaun Conner, and Officer William Dunn were assisting at the scene of a crash on southbound Interstate 5, south of Via California. Officers Conner and Dunn suddenly heard a loud crash and saw a large fireball dissipating into the air on the opposite side of the freeway. Both officers immediately responded to the scene. Upon his arrival, Officer Dunn heard another loud explosion and saw a white vehicle had crashed into a metal guardrail. The vehicle had landed on its left side and the front end was fully engulfed in flames. Officer Dunn quickly retrieved the fire extinguisher from the patrol vehicle and ran toward the flames. As he approached, Officer Dunn heard a woman screaming from inside the vehicle. Officer Dunn utilized the fire extinguisher to attack the flames, but due to the fire's intensity, the fire extinguisher was ineffective. Officer Conner and his partner provided a traffic break to slow vehicle traffic and arrived on scene shortly after Officer Dunn arrived. Seeing the dangerous circumstances, Officer Dunn climbed onto the metal guardrail, utilized his baton, and broke open the right-rear window. Officer Conner also climbed onto the guardrail and assisted with open the right-front window. Both Officers Dunn and Conner could hear screaming coming from inside the vehicle, but due to the thick smoke and poor lighting, neither officer could find the woman inside. Officer Conner broke open the glass sunroof and despite the thick smoke and intense heat from the fire, he reached into the burning vehicle, located the woman, and pulled her out. Orange County Fire Authority arrived on scene, extinguished the fire, and transported the woman to the hospital with minor injuries and smoke inhalation. Officer Conner placed himself in extreme danger and risked his life to save the woman from certain death. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Conner went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Shaun Conner

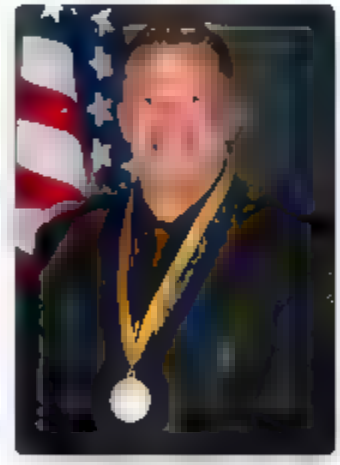
Christopher Monaghan Connolly

Lifeguard II

Department of Parks and Recreation

12/11/2015

Special Service Award (Silver)



On December 11, 2015, at 11:00 a.m., during the biggest El Niño surf event in years, with 15 to 20 foot waves along a rocky shoreline, California State Parks Lifeguard II Christopher Connolly responded to a call at Faria Beach north of the City of Ventura. Lifeguard Connolly entered the water without hesitation. He swam to the victim, secured him to a life buoy, and then fought wave sets while seeking a safe spot to exit the surf. Lifeguard Connolly traveled south from the initial rescue point for more than three-quarters of a mile in a swift current while attempts from other rescuers to reach the pair from shore failed. He held the victim close for protection and talked the surfer through the ordeal. Eventually, Lifeguard Connolly was able to reach a sandy beach with the rescuee who was exhausted, but unhurt. Without the actions of Lifeguard Connolly, the surfer likely would have drowned in the pounding surf. Veteran lifeguards from California State Parks called Connolly's efforts one of the most demanding and dynamic rescues ever witnessed.

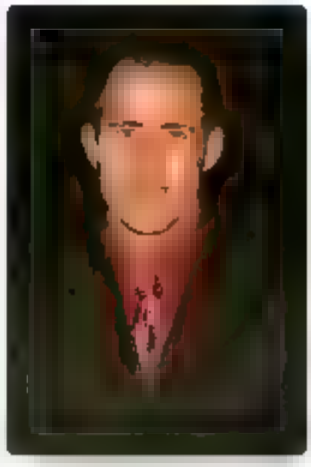
Eric R. Connolly

Forester I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/19/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)



On September 19, 2009, on a very hot and dry Southern California day in Riverside County, a brush fire started near State Route 79 and Sage Road east of Temecula. The fire spread rapidly, eventually burning over 340 acres and destroying eight homes. Firefighting conditions were extremely explosive with the temperature near 100°F, winds blowing up to 19 miles per hour and flame lengths ranging from 60 to 90 feet high. CAL FIRE Copter 301 was flying a fire mission as an initial attack responding crew. On board was the pilot and CAL FIRE employees Captain Abril and Firefighters Connolly, DeLeon, Medina, Ricketts, and Santone. The crew was assigned to a hot spot in an attempt to contain the rapidly expanding fire. After landing, the crew began hot spotting the fire using hand tools. Shortly thereafter, the crew learned of a woman trapped in her home and surrounded by fire. Captain Abril immediately recognized he was near the location. The crew frantically began looking for and soon found a barefoot 84-year old woman carrying two dogs. The woman was standing in front of a residence that was fully involved with fire and frantically told the crew she didn't know where to go or what to do. The crew immediately gave the woman a canteen of water and medically assessed her. Two firefighters entered a nearby residence and retrieved a blanket and pair of shoes for her. They shielded the woman with the blanket, assessed the best escape route, and at great personal risk to the woman and themselves, passed through fire and nearly blinding smoke conditions to a safer location. The actions of the crew, without regard for their personal safety, saved the life of the woman. The State of California takes great pride in presenting to Captain Frank Abril and Firefighters Eric Connolly, David DeLeon, Jose Medina, Adam Ricketts and Charles Santone, these Gold Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Wallace Coon

State Park Peace Officer Supervisor

Department of Parks and Recreation

11/9/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of November 9, 2018, State Park Peace Officer Supervisor Sergeant Wallace Coon responded to the Camp Fire. Sergeant Coon and State Park Peace Officer Mark Hofer were two of the first officers on scene at what would become one of the deadliest fires in state history. Sergeant Coon worked to evacuate hundreds of homes, starting along Pentz Road. By the end, he had helped evacuate more than 300 homes in the Paradise, Magalia and Concow areas. He also helped with the evacuation of Feather River Hospital, which was severely damaged by the fire. While rescuing residents, Sergeant Coon was confronted by scorching flames and downed trees that blocked roads. He continuously found safe routes to prevent the public and himself from being trapped by the fire. Although well aware of the number of lives already lost to the rapidly spreading fire, he tirelessly and bravely went back into harm's way to do whatever was necessary to save lives. Working 12 hours that day, Sergeant Coon played a critical role in coordinating resources on the ground in the active fire area in addition to helping to evacuate residents. He helped to get staff where they were needed to save as many people as possible. He provided current information on the conditions that the first responders were facing and made tough decisions to balance helping the community with keeping the first responders safe. In his role as communicator and coordinator, as well as rescuer, Sergeant Coon was a vital and courageous part of the Northern Buttes District team during the Camp Fire. With no regard for his own safety, Sergeant Coon went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Parks and Recreation State Park Peace Officer Supervisor Sergeant Wallace Coon.

Kenneth Cooper

Fish and Game Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

1/2/1971

Special Act Award (Gold)

Fish Hatchery Manager Philo Jewett, Fish Culturist John Sparks and Fish and Game Warden Kenneth Cooper saved a boating accident victim who was floundering in the freezing waters of the Comanche Reservoir

Christopher Corpstein

Correctional Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

5/24/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 24, 2017, at 10:20 a.m., in the Pelican Bay State Prison outdoor exercise yard, with approximately three hundred inmates, a one-on-one fight started. Correctional officers responded to the fight to stop the incident. While responding staff were attempting to quell the incident, approximately 130 inmates began rushing and attacking the officers. As Officer Christopher Corpstein approached the mass of attacking inmates, he noted a large number of inmates were attacking an officer who was down on the ground. He also noticed a group of inmates attacking Officer Zachery McCully who was being pulled to the ground by the group of inmates. Making a split-second decision, Officer Corpstein decided he could be of no help to the first officer on the ground, but could render aid to Officer McCully. Officer Corpstein responded through the crowd of attacking inmates toward Officer McCully. The inmates turned on Officer Corpstein, and he was forced to deploy chemical agents toward the group of attacking inmates. Due to the large number of inmates blocking his path, Officer Corpstein was ultimately unable to reach Officer McCully. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Corpstein's heroic act saved the lives of fellow officers and inmates in the face of a large prison fight. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctional Officer Christopher Corpstein

Adam Gabriel Cortinas

Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/30/1997

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 5 36 p.m., Officer Adam Cortinas was eastbound on Interstate 40 when he heard radio traffic concerning a traffic collision. Officer Cortinas responded to the scene, arriving with three minutes of hearing the message. Observing the passenger vehicle in the center divider with flames coming from the rear undercarriage, Officer Cortinas grabbed his fire extinguisher and ran toward the vehicle. Officer Cortinas inquired if anyone was still in the vehicle and was informed there was a woman in the right rear seat. The officer handed the fire extinguisher to an unidentified individual and requested he spray the fire while Officer Cortinas approached the vehicle and attempted to open the rear passenger door. The door was jammed, however the window was down or broken and Officer Cortinas could see a female slumped in the seat. He reached in through the window, put his arms around her and pulled as hard as he could, but was unable to remove her from the vehicle. The smoke and flames coming from beneath the vehicle where Officer Cortinas was standing, forced him back. Bystanders began throwing dirt on the flames in attempt to keep them away from the officer as he made his rescue effort. Officer Cortinas reentered the vehicle and pushed the front seat forward to allow more working room and was once again forced from the vehicle by the flames. The black smoke swirling around inside the vehicle made it almost impossible for Officer Cortinas to see. A third attempt was made to remove the victim from the vehicle. Officer Cortinas used his knife to cut the shoulder harness portion of the seat belt as he again attempted to pull the victim out of the vehicle. At this point the vehicle was fully engulfed in flames and the third rescue attempt was aborted. Unfortunately the passenger did not survive the accident.

Ruben E. Coyle

Program Administrator

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

6/25/1967

Special Act Award (Gold)

Ruben E Coyle rescued an 18 year old man from a burning car after an accident on the Santa Ana Freeway Mr Coyle beat out the burning grass, a result of the accident, with a towel so he could approach the vehicle. After enlisting the aid of two bystanders to right the overturned automobile, Mr. Coyle tried to pull the victim free, but the victim's seat belt held him in place. Reaching across the injured victim, Mr Coyle managed to unfasten the seat belt and the victim fell to the still burning glass. Mr. Coyle helped the victim through the grass fire and used the towel to put out flames on the victim's back Mr Coyle sustained minor burns in the rescue The victim suffered critical burns

Kevin S. Craig

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/2/2000

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 2, 2000, at approximately 11 03 p m , Officer Kevin Craig and his partner, Officer Christina Raughton, were dispatched to a traffic collision on State Route 1 (Pacific Coast Highway). This portion of the roadway is located near Sycamore Canyon in Ventura County, 10 miles south of Oxnard At this location, the winding highway runs parallel to the Pacific Ocean and has a steep, rocky drop-off to the ocean level south of the highway The officers arrived within 10 minutes and were the first emergency personnel on the scene. The vehicle had run off the roadway over a cliff, crashed over large rocks, and landed at the surf line of the Pacific Ocean approximately 66 feet below the roadway The vehicle incurred major damage, particularly to its rear end. The driver, Mr. Adam Martinez, and right front passenger, Ms. Heather Martin, wore seat belts and suffered only minor injuries Ms Lauren Butterworth, the 16-year old female passenger in the rear seat, was unrestrained and was ejected through the rear window of the vehicle. She came to rest below the vehicle, which was precariously balanced on a large rock in the heavy surf. She had broken her left femur, sustained head injuries, and was in and out of consciousness. After Mr. Martinez helped Ms. Martin out of the vehicle and to higher ground, he heard moaning and returned to the vehicle to find Ms Butterworth in the surf below the vehicle. Mr. Martinez climbed down and pulled her up under several rocks that formed a small alcove above the tide level. They were still being struck by waves, but he could not move to higher ground without abandoning Ms. Butterworth. When Officers Craig and Raughton arrived on the scene, Officer Craig observed a large wave wash over Mr Martinez and Ms Butterworth Officer Craig removed his duty belt and climbed down to them as Officer Raughton advised the Ventura Area dispatch center of the situation and requested additional assistance. Officer Craig helped Mr Martinez move Ms. Butterworth out of the alcove, then climbed up on an adjacent rock. Mr. Martinez held

Ms Butterworth's legs as Officer Craig grasped her shoulders and lifted her up to the rock Officer Raughton climbed down to the rock and, while kneeling, supported Ms Butterworth's head and neck until the arrival of Emergency Medical Services personnel.

Tom Crass

Fire Captain Specialist/Law Enforcement

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/19/2021

Special Act Award (Gold)

On February 19, 2021, at approximately 10 30 a m , law enforcement received reports of "shots fired" at a gas station in the community of Three Rivers, Tulare County. Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Officers Tom Crass and Ryan Wallace responded to the scene. They spotted a vehicle matching that of the suspected shooter and initiated a traffic stop Once stopped, the suspect began to shoot at the officers The officers returned fire as the suspect drove off. Officers Crass and Wallace immediately pursued the suspect. Multiple law enforcement officers also joined in the pursuit. The suspect drove head-on into highway traffic, recklessly shooting at officers The suspect drove into an orchard, crashing into several trees, before fleeing on foot. While a perimeter was being established, additional shots were heard near the suspect's crashed vehicle Both officers discovered a California Highway Patrol officer had been ambushed and shot. Placing themselves between the downed officer, and the suspect a few rows of trees away, a gun fight ensued. Once the suspect became incapacitated and taken into custody, Officers Crass and Wallace began to administer care to the injured CHP officer until transported via helicopter to a trauma center With no regard for his own safety, Officer Crass went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Officer Tom Crass

Ciaran Crawford

Long Beach Police Department

Other

5/30/2002

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

"On Thursday, May 30, 2002, at 1727 hours, Officer B Milovich was dispatched to the Top Value Market, 421 Pacific Avenue, regarding a possib e Assault with a Deadly Weapon occurring now, with three subjects down. Additional information was broadcast that shots were being fired from inside the market. Officer Milovich was the first to arrive on scene and was immediately met by hysterical citizens, who were p eading for him to help them, advising him that there was a man inside the store shooting innocent victims. At this time, Community Policing Officers W Johnston, and C Crawford assisted Officer Milovich The Three of them formed an Emergency Action Team (EAT) and without hesitation or regard for their own safety, entered the store The officers had limited information as to the suspect's description and were immediately confronted by numerous victims, who were frantica y trying to leave the store. The officers showed great restraint with these people, not knowing if one of them was possibly the suspect. The officers observed at least two victims on the ground, who were morta y wounded, one of them being an 8-year-old child. There were additional shooting victims within the store, b eeding. With the carnage in front of them, the officers were still ab e to maintain their focus and subsequently isolated the suspect, who was armed with two handguns. The suspect pointed his weapon at Officer Milovich, at which time Officers Johnston and Crawford engaged the suspect in a gun battle and morta y wounded him. Officers Mi ovich, Johnston, and Crawford are to be commended for the tremendous job they did on that night By their actions, in a manner that was well above and beyond the call of duty, each of these officers demonstrated uncommon valor by directly placing their lives on the line to prevent the suspect from shooting anyone else. There is no doubt in anyone's mind that the immediate actions of Officers Milovich, Johnston, and Crawford saved many ives The suspect c early possessed the weaponry and ammunition with which he cou d have taken many more lives. The community and our Department are very fortunate to have these valiant officers dedicated to our service. They clearly demonstrated that they possess the attributes that we all aspire to, bravery, character, discip ine and the willingness to truly protect and serve the citizens of Long Beach "

David Crislip

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/27/2016

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 27, 2016, at 2:41am, Officer David Crislip, and his partners Officers Kyle Bush and Felix Serpas, were on patrol when they observed a car pass them at a high rate of speed. As they followed the car it suddenly veered to the right across all lanes and exited I-10 at Francisquito Avenue. The officers continued to follow and observed it fail to stop at the stop sign at the end of the off-ramp. As the car accelerated onto North Garvey Avenue, Officer Crislip initiated an enforcement stop. The car failed to yield, and continued to travel at approximately 60-70 miles per hour on North Garvey Avenue. The car turned onto Big Dalton Road and drifted to the right, striking a raised concrete curb, several trees, a water main line, and a fire hydrant. The car then spun back into the roadway and immediately caught on fire. Officer Crislip exited the patrol vehicle and ran to the burning car where he observed the driver exiting the car. Officer Crislip assisted the driver to safety and returned to the burning vehicle where he observed a female passenger trapped on the rear right floorboard. Officer Crislip reached into the car through the thick smoke and intense heat, and with great effort, removed the female passenger from the vehicle and moved her to a safe location. Officer Bush recognized the severity of the incident and retrieved the patrol vehicle's fire extinguisher to battle the growing flames of the burning vehicle. Officer Serpas and Officer Crislip then heard additional screaming and saw another passenger trapped in the front seat of the burning car. Officer Serpas used his knife to cut the seat belt holding the passenger in the vehicle. Officer Crislip, with the help of Officer Serpas and Officer Bush again braved the heat, smoke, and flames to remove the passenger from the car. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Crislip's heroic act saved three lives from a burning vehicle. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer David Crislip

Pedro Cruz

State Police Officer

California State Police

10/17/1989

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 5 p.m. Officer Pedro Cruz was patro ing the downtown area of Oakland at the time of the Loma Prieta earthquake and immediately responded to the disaster scene. Aware that the structure was unstable and that aftershocks could occur at any moment, Officer Cruz climbed onto the co apsed freeway administering first aid to injured victims and organizing the removal of a number of victims to a safer p ace on the ground. Without regard for his own safety, Officer Cruz continued his search by climbing into a small opening between the co apsed upper and lower levels of the overpass. As Officer Cruz maneuvered among the broken glass, rubble, leaking gasoline and oil checking crushed vehic es for survivors, he located one unconscious man and dragged him to the edge of the roadway where the victim was moved to safety Upon re-entering the co apsed structure, Officer Cruz located an e der y coup e in a crushed vehicle with serious injuries With the assistance of three Naval Officers, Officer Cruz pried the doors open and removed the couple to a safer location. After approximately four hours of assisting victims at the disaster scene, Officer Cruz returned to the State Po icy Command Post and worked an additional 12 hours before being re ieved of duty

Gary Dana

Officer

California Highway Patrol

11/11/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On November 11, 2007, at approximately 11:30 a.m., a California Highway Patrol Officer began following a vehicle on Interstate 280, north of State Route 92 in San Mateo County. The female driver stopped in the middle of Doran Bridge, left her vehicle, stepped over the concrete bridge rail, and sat on the narrow rail, threatening to jump. The Officer stopped his patrol car and commanded her to get off the bridge rail. CHP Officer Gary Dana heard the pursuit on his radio and responded to assist. Upon arrival, Officer Dana parked his motorcycle behind the woman's vehicle and was not noticed by the woman. While the other Officer gave verbal commands to distract her attention, Officer Dana approached the woman from behind. Just as she began to slip off of the rail, Officer Dana jumped out and wrapped both of his arms around the woman, pulling her back onto the roadway. After a short struggle, the woman was taken into custody. As a result of the struggle, Officer Dana suffered abrasions and injuries to his back, but his heroic actions saved the woman's life and prevented a potential traffic disaster had she fallen onto the highway below.

Robert Dashiell

Fire Apparatus Engineer

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

1/5/1979

Special Act Award (Gold)

Fire Apparatus Engineer Robert Dashiell, on January 5, 1979, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his personal safety and life in rescuing two persons from rain-swollen Salt Creek near Canyon Lake in Riverside County. At approximately 9:08 pm, Engineer Dashiell responded as a volunteer to assist in the rescue of a man and a woman stranded on top of a partially submerged vehicle. In spite of debris and swift currents, Dashiell twice entered the swollen creek, with a rope tied around his waist, and made repeated attempts to get a safety line to the individuals. Before rescue could be accomplished, the car was swept downstream by rising floodwaters, forcing the victims to jump. The rushing water carried them out of sight. Nearby, where Salt Creek enters Canyon Lake, Engineer Dashiell commandeered a small, non-motorized boat to search for the victims. Since debris and strong currents made progress extremely difficult, he climbed up on top of a floating dock for a better view. Locating the victims in some floating debris several feet from the end of the dock, Engineer Dashiell took off his life vest and threw it to the woman. He then entered the water and, while hanging onto the dock, extended his legs to the victims, pulled the two people to safety and assisted in getting them to the hospital.

Scott Davidson

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

12/26/2021

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the night of December 26, 2021 Caltrans Equipment Operator II Scott Davidson was on storm patrol driving south on Highway 3 in Trinity County through heavy snowfall. Despite limited visibility he noticed tire tracks going over an embankment. Mr. Davidson exited his vehicle to further investigate and located a truck with a young male driver pinned inside. He immediately notified dispatch and proceeded to break the passenger window to gain access to the young man who was freezing and going in and out of consciousness Mr Davidson covered him with his own clothes and talked to the young man to keep him alert as he was not sure of the extent of his injuries. A short time later, Caltrans Equipment Operator IIs Jeremy Maraviov and Trevor Gipson arrived on scene to help The three took turns aiding the young man and providing what clothing they had to keep him warm, while also clearing snow and removing portions of the vehicle to clear a path for emergency personnel. After a period of time, CAL FIRE personnel arrived, and Mr. Davidson suggested they attach a chain from his four-yard vehicle to the crashed vehicle to secure it so that CAL FIRE could safely extract the driver. They then deployed flares while Mr. Maraviov and Mr. Gipson shoveled steps out to help the first responders They also helped the fire crew with any tools and supplies needed, and once the injured driver was extracted, they assisted the first responders with getting him up the embankment and safely into the ambulance. Due to extremely cold temperatures, remote location and injuries sustained, the young man likely would not have survived had it not been for the attentiveness and selfless actions performed by Mr. Davidson, Mr. Gipson and Mr. Maraviov Adding to their selflessness, none of the three reported their heroic acts to their supervisors A letter to Caltrans management was received from the local CAL FIRE captain, commending them on their valiant efforts The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation CalTrans Equipment Operator II Scott Davidson for his act of heroism extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Christopher M. Davis

Staff Sergeant , Instructor, Military Police

California Military Department

6/30/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 30, 2008, at approximately 7:30 am, in overcast, foggy conditions, Master Sergeant Cari Beetham and Staff Sergeant Christopher Davis were traveling north on Highway 1. As they approached the Camp San Luis Obispo overpass, they witnessed a small sedan lose control, strike the center barrier, and then swerve back across the highway and over the side of the overpass embankment. The driver's side of the vehicle collided into a tree which stopped the sedan at a 45 degree angle, approximately 30 meters above Chorro Creek. Master Sergeant Beetham and Staff Sergeant Davis immediately pulled over and rushed to the scene of the accident. Without hesitation, and knowing the sedan was unstable and could possibly slide down the embankment, Staff Sergeant Davis entered the car from the passenger's side and assessed the woman's vital signs. The woman was unconscious. Her left arm was pinned between the tree and the driver's side door, her head and neck were hyper-extended, and her airway was closed off due to the caved in roof on the driver's side. For over 20 minutes, Staff Sergeant Davis provided life saving aid, by propping her head up to re-open her airway. As the woman went in and out of consciousness, Staff Sergeant Davis treated the woman for shock and continued to reassure her to prevent panic and further injury. Meanwhile, Master Sergeant Beetham scrambled to find materials to brace the tires in order to prevent the precariously positioned sedan from rolling down the embankment. Master Sergeant Beetham then called 911 emergency services and secured the accident scene by directing and controlling traffic. After fire rescue arrived, Master Sergeant Beetham assisted in moving the sedan and releasing the woman's arm. Staff Sergeant Davis continued to hold the woman's head up while rescue personnel worked from the rear passenger side to remove the woman. The actions of Master Sergeant Beetham and Staff Sergeant Davis, without regard for their own safety, saved the woman's life.

John Davis

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/4/1993

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 1 30 a.m., Officers John D Davis and Andrew Engelbrecht were dispatched to an accident site of SR99 north of Wilson Landing Road in Chico When they arrived they observed a pickup in a wa nut orchard about twenty-five feet from the roadway edge. The pickup had hit a large walnut tree head on and the engine was on fire. Officer Davis ran to the pickup and observed the driver was on the passenger side of the vehicle with his head barely visible above the passenger door window. He was ca ing for he p The engine compartment was comp ete y engulfed in flames and the fire was beginning to extend up the sides of the front fenders. The driver's side of the vehicle was crushed, preventing rescue from that side Officer Davis grabbed the passenger side door handle and jerked the hand e several times before it would open. The driver was in and out of consciousness and wore a prosthesis on his arm, preventing him from helping himself out of the vehicle. By now the fire had spread into the cab through the firewa on the driver's side. Officer Davis reached into the vehicle and grabbed the victim under the arms and started to pull. Due to the weight of the driver and his feet being lodged under the dashboard, Officer Davis was unable to pull the driver out After turning the driver over, Officer Davis was ab e to pu the driver out of the truck Whi e doing so, the heat and flames became so intense that the rear window exp oded and flames began to shoot out of it. Once Officer Davis freed the driver, Officer Engelbrecht assisted in pu ing the victim to a safe ocation Officer Davis's prompt and heroic action spared the driver's life

Willie Davis

Highway Landscape Maintenance Technician

Department of Transportation

1/10/1966

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 10, 1966, Willie Davis, a Highway Landscape Maintenance technician, was on duty trimming trees at Oak and Fell Streets in San Francisco with his coworker, Ben Harbor, when an accident occurred on the Central Freeway above them. Willie ran to the scene accompanied by his coworker, as did some other Public Works maintenance workers, and they found a car overturned already in flames, with a young woman pleading for someone to help remove her baby from the auto. Willie immediately crawled into the overturned vehicle and attempted to rescue the child but was unable to do so because the seat had broken loose and was lying atop the 2-year-old male child. Willie's coworker entered the car from the other side, raised the seat, and cut off the child's seatbelt making it possible for Mr. Davis and Mr. Harbor to remove the infant just an instant before the car exploded and was completely enveloped in flames. Mr. Davis disregarded the imminent danger of explosion and fatal burns to himself while removing the child from the burning automobile. Unfortunately, the child passed away later that evening from the serious injuries sustained in the high speed crash. Willie Davis performed an extraordinary act of heroism, at great risk to his safety and life, in trying to save the life of another person.

William L. Davis, Jr.

Fish and Game Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

12/22/1965

Special Act Award (Gold)

William L. David Jr. abandoned a lumber-carrier in the swirling Kamath River and fought his way through the water and debris to rescue a family of three. Later that same night, he again waded through shoulder-deep churning water to direct the rescue of 20 men, woman and children before the flood demolished the house they were trapped in.

Kelley C. DeGifford

Fire Fighter I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

8/29/2006

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 29, 2006, at 3:00 p.m., CAL FIRE then Fire Apparatus Engineer and now Fire Captain William J. Smith, Firefighter I Kelley C. DeGifford and Firefighter I Jacklyn D. Bowes were dispatched to a vegetation fire in the vicinity of Newport and Fish Hatchery Roads in Riverside. Homes on the north end of Newport Road were threatened by the fire and there were numerous reports of a woman trapped in her home. An off-duty San Bernardino Sheriff's Deputy approached the CAL FIRE Commander and identified himself as the son of the woman trapped in her home. The CAL FIRE Commander told the son that an engine was on its way and to not go up to the home. The son ignored the instructions and went to the house where he found his mother. As Fire Apparatus Engineer Smith and Firefighters DeGifford and Bowes arrived at the residence, he noticed that the rapidly spreading fire had cut off their escape route. He instructed the son and mother to take refuge inside the house, and the Engine Crew would shelter them with water from their hoses until the fire passed. Fire Apparatus Engineer Smith had approximately 30 seconds to get the victims inside the house and get the hoses ready before the fire hit the house.

Firefighter DeGifford sprayed along the south side of the house to protect it from the fire. Firefighter Bowes and Fire Apparatus Engineer Smith attempted to spray a second hose but were unable to do so because of the extreme heat from the attic vents. Fire Apparatus Engineer Smith entered the house and evacuated the occupants from the burning house and brought them to safety. Their actions saved the woman and her son's life

Eric Degraffenreid

Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/28/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Sergeant Donald Jordan, and Officer Eric Degraffenreid, on January 28, 2003, performed an act of heroism at great risk to their personal safety when they successfully rescued a citizen from a burning vehicle. At 8:40 p.m., Sergeant Jordan was conducting a ride-along with Officer Degraffenreid and monitored a radio-dispatch call regarding a traffic collision, caused by a horse running loose in freeway traffic lanes on Interstate 5 As Sergeant Jordan and Officer Degraffenreid responded to the area, they encountered another vehicle, which had struck the horse, veered across the southbound and northbound lanes, and had partially overturned in a ditch adjacent to the freeway. The vehicle, a 2002 Chevrolet Tahoe, was almost engulfed in flames as Sergeant Jordan and Officer Degraffenreid arrived at the scene Sergeant Jordan and Officer Degraffenreid encountered the passenger, Mr Cyrus Jenkins, staggering outside the vehicle injured and disoriented. He advised Sergeant Jordan and Officer Degraffenreid that his wife, Mrs. Earnie Jenkins, 67-years-old, was trapped in the burning vehicle. Both Sergeant Jordan and Officer Degraffenreid rushed to the burning vehicle without hesitation. As the flames spread throughout the engine and passenger compartment of the vehicle, the seriously injured, and disoriented female victim could not free herself from the driver's seat Due to the awkward angle of the vehicle, both employees were forced to expose their hands and forearms to the flames in order to free the victim. Both employees struggled to free the occupant as flames engulfed the passenger compartment and driver's seat area Both flame and harsh smoke greatly jeopardized the safety of both employees as they struggled to free the driver from the burning vehicle. Just prior to the point when rescue would have been impossible due to the rapidly encroaching flames, the employees managed to pull the victim out of the vehicle. A moment later, the vehicle exploded into flames and set a nearby building afire. Unquestionable, the actions of these brave employees saved Mrs. Jenkins' life The victim sustained moderate injuries as a result of the collision and credited the officers with saving her life Sergeant Jordan sustained minor burn and smoke injuries as a result of the rescue. The actions of Sergeant Jordan and Officer Degraffenreid were truly courageous and performed at great peril to their own lives "above and beyond the call of duty."

David A. DeLeon

Forester I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/19/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 19, 2009, on a very hot and dry Southern California day in Riverside County, a brush fire started near State Route 79 and Sage Road east of Temecula. The fire spread rapidly, eventually burning over 340 acres and destroying eight homes. Firefighting conditions were extremely explosive with the temperature near 100°F, winds blowing up to 19 miles per hour and flame lengths ranging from 60 to 90 feet high. CAL FIRE Copter 301 was flying a fire mission as an initial attack responding crew. On board was the pilot and CAL FIRE employees Captain Abril and Firefighters Connolly, DeLeon, Medina, Ricketts, and Santone. The crew was assigned to a hot spot in an attempt to contain the rapidly expanding fire. After landing, the crew began hot spotting the fire using hand tools. Shortly thereafter, the crew learned of a woman trapped in her home and surrounded by fire. Captain Abril immediately recognized he was near the location. The crew frantically began looking for and soon found a barefoot 84-year old woman carrying two dogs. The woman was standing in front of a residence that was fully involved with fire and frantically told the crew she didn't know where to go or what to do. The crew immediately gave the woman a canteen of water and medically assessed her. Two firefighters entered a nearby residence and retrieved a blanket and pair of shoes for her. They shielded the woman with the blanket, assessed the best escape route, and at great personal risk to the woman and themselves, passed through fire and nearly blinding smoke conditions to a safer location. The actions of the crew, without regard for their personal safety, saved the life of the woman. The State of California takes great pride in presenting to Captain Frank Abril and Firefighters Eric Connolly, David DeLeon, Jose Medina, Adam Ricketts and Charles Santone, these Gold Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Delbert Denney

District 3 Highway Technician I

Department of Transportation

11/30/1969

Special Act Award (Gold)

In the late night hours of November 30, 1969 Delbert Denney, District 3 Highway Technician I, observed his neighbor's house on fire He ran out and while Mr Denney did his very best to douse the house with water from a garden hose until the fire department could arrived, he discovered that his neighbor was still inside the building. Mr. Denney entered the burning house and managed to drag the unconscious victim to safety, but while doing so, Mr Denney himself suffered minor burns Tragically, the neighbor later died from burns he sustained in the terrible fire. Mr Denney displayed unparalleled courage in his valiant attempt to save another's life and put his own life in harm's way with his truly heroic act.

Omar Desiderio

Fire Apparatus Operator

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

10/12/2022

Special Act Award (Gold)

In the early hours of the morning of October 12, 2020, Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Apparatus Engineer Omar Desiderio, Fire Apparatus Engineer Tyler Williams, and others were dispatched to a two-story building engulfed in flames in the mountain community of Pine Cove. Upon arrival, fire department personnel encountered flames throughout the first story, overcoming the second story, and burning through the roof. One victim was on the roof frantically calling for help with a second victim unconscious and trapped inside a second story bedroom. An immediate rescue of the trapped residents was needed. Unable to make access from the first floor, Engineer Williams and Engineer Desiderio leaped into action without direction and placed a ladder to the second story to gain access. They broke open the bedroom window and dove headfirst into the burning room without hose lines. Implementing a left-hand search, they located the unconscious victim under heavy fire and smoke conditions. Engineer Williams and Engineer Desiderio dragged the victim through the bedroom window with heavy fire rolling over them. The victim was flown by air ambulance to a burn center with severe injuries, but after treatment for 3rd degree burns, she survived and fully recovered. With no regard for his own safety, Fire Apparatus Engineer Desiderio went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Apparatus Engineer Omar Desiderio.

Lee Dewhirst

Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/30/1978

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 30, 1978, Officers Don Baker and Lee Dewhirst, were on patrol along U.S. 101 around midnight when they saw a ball of flames ahead of them. Approaching the scene, they saw a burning van with flames spurting out 30 feet from the windows and the top. As the officers approached on foot, Officer Baker heard a voice crying "he p me." He tugged the van's hand e but it was jammed. When flames forced the officers back, they went back for a pry bar. Officer Dewhirst managed to get c ose enough to jam the bar under a hinge and pull hard, but the effort threw his back out. Officer Baker quickly took over and worked on the door, instructing bystanders to throw dirt through the window to cut the flames. When the door finally came free he dragged the driver out. The van had been full of c othing that had fallen on the man and protected him. Officer Baker reached him just as the last layer of clothing began to burn: the man's foot and arm were protruding from the pile of clothes and were severely burned. The driver said later that he was so sure he would die that he had given himself the last rites.

Michael DeWitt

Officer

Department of Justice

9/25/2012

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

Officer Michael DeWitt of the San Diego Police Gang Suppression Team/S.W.A.T., was driving to work when he observed officers under fire while investigating a child sexual abuse call. At the scene, he learned two deputies had been struck by gunfire emanating from a second floor apartment and were seriously injured. As more gunfire erupted, Officer DeWitt donned his S.W.A.T. gear and assembled a team of deputies, administer tactical assignments to those present. Maneuvering through a hail of gunfire, DeWitt lead the team up the stairway. There they rescued the wounded Detective Perez, and carried him to safety. Witnessing a woman and her two small children bolting from the apartment complex in sheer panic and determining they were in the suspect's line of fire, Officer DeWitt abandoned his position of safety to chase after the woman. Picking up her four-year-old child, he instructed that she carry her infant, Officer DeWitt led her across the street to safety. Officer DeWitt then ran back to the complex to assist with the rescue of the seconded wounded police officer, Sergeant Johnson, and apprehend the suspect. Detective Perez and Sergeant Johnson were rushed to surgery and are recovering from their injuries.

Pablo Diaz

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

6/24/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 24, 2010, at approximately 2:00 p.m., Caltrans employees Arthur Grijalva, Tommy Neri, Pedro Vasquez, Pablo Diaz, and Leonardo Necochea were traveling on Interstate 8 in the Jacumba area of San Diego County when they came upon an accident. A van had overturned in the median and landed upright on its wheels starting a small brush fire. Mr. Neri and Mr. Necochea rushed to the vehicle and found an unconscious woman in the driver's seat. Mr. Diaz and Mr. Vasquez quickly began attempts to extinguish the fire. In an effort to prevent additional traffic collisions, Mr. Grijalva began directing traffic. While Mr. Neri and Mr. Necochea were administering first aid, they noticed the fire was getting out of control and approaching the vehicle. With the help of Mr. Diaz and Mr. Vasquez, they rigged a backboard from a portion of the wrecked vehicle, cut the woman's seatbelt, placed her on the backboard, and safely removed her from the vehicle to a secure location. Within minutes after removing the woman, the vehicle went up in flames. Mr. Neri and Mr. Necochea stayed with the woman and provided additional first aid while the others began assisting Mr. Grijalva with traffic control until help arrived. The actions of the Caltrans employees, without regard for their own safety, saved the woman's life. The State of California takes great pride in presenting Arthur Grijalva this Silver Medal of Valor, and Tommy Neri, Pablo Diaz, Leonardo Necochea, and Pedro Vasquez these Gold Medals of Valor, for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the call of duty.

Ben Didway

Chief Engineer, Office of Buildings and Grounds

Department of General Services

9/19/1988

Special Service Award (Silver)

While supervising the crew assigned to the DMV Building, Mr. Didway was headed to his car in the DMV parking lot on lunch break when he saw an angry and out-of-control man turn and punch an unsuspecting woman. When Mr. Didway saw the outburst, he threw down his lunch and ran toward the assailant. The man was going to strike the woman again when he saw Mr. Didway. He started to run away and then abruptly turned and headed toward Mr. Didway. Mr Didway succeeded in pinning him to the back end of a car, restraining the fighting and kicking man until DMV security officers arrived

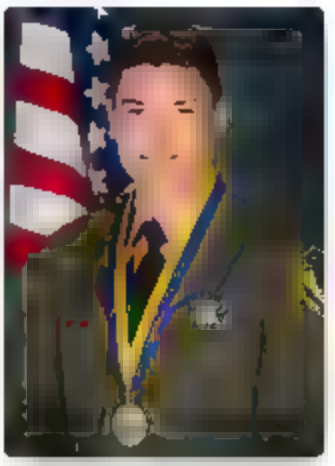
Michael V. Dilts

Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

7/27/2016

Special Service Award (Silver)



On July 27, 2016 at 12:00 p.m., Fish and Wildlife Officer Michael Dilts was on patrol near the San Gabriel River in Sea Beach when he was flagged down by a man and child. The man told Officer Dilts that a woman had just driven her vehicle into the water and was drowning. Officer Dilts drove his patrol vehicle to the west bank of the river where he observed a purple van floating in the water approximately 25 yards from the shore with a woman in the front seating area. The van was semi-submerged, with all of the windows above the surface. The woman shouted, "Go away, I don't want to be saved!" Two men entered the water and began swimming towards the van. Officer Dilts radioed for assistance, and, anticipating the need to enter the water, he removed his duty belt and secured it in his vehicle. When he turned back around he found the two men had reached the van, which was now submerged to the point that only the rear trunk of the vehicle was above the surface. Officer Dilts entered the water in full uniform, boots and bullet-proof vest, and swam to the van. The woman was now in the trunk area of the van. Upon reaching the victim, Officer Dilts performed an "active drowning victim rescue," by reaching under the victim's armpits and grasping her shoulders. With the assistance of one of the other men, he then pulled her away from the sinking van. When they were 10 yards away the van sank completely. Officer Dilts and the two civilians, at great personal risk to themselves, saved the victim's life and prevented her from drowning. Although unwilling, the victim was safely removed from the vehicle and assisted to shore.

Early Ditsavong

Private First Class

California Army National Guard

7/11/1998

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 11, 1998, Early Ditsavong and three friends were enjoying a day at a sandy beach where the north fork of the American River flows into Upper Lake Clementine. As they got up to leave, he saw a young boy struggling in the water and leapt in to save him. He pushed the boy to shore after helping him escape from a deep pool where the current from the river swirled into the lake. The ten year old boy made it to safety, but, unfortunately, Mr Ditsavong disappeared under the water in the strong current and drowned.

Jude Donahue

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/26/2006

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 26, 2006, California Highway Patrol (CHP) Officer Jude Donahue was on patrol when he observed a motor home partially engulfed in flames. In order to determine if the vehicle was occupied, Officer Donahue shattered one of the motor home's windows. He was soon joined by two officers from the Los Angeles Police Department, who tried to extinguish the fire. One of the police department officers discovered a man in the rear of the vehicle. Officer Donahue went to extraordinary lengths to get through the locked rear door of the motor home. With approaching flames and smoke, Officer Donahue valiantly entered the burning motor home to rescue the man. In spite of the dense smoke and increasing heat, Officer Donahue located the man seated in the rear of the motor home and Officer Donahue made several attempts to grasp the incapacitated man, but the victim's clothing ripped. While making the rescue attempt, Officer Donahue was overcome by the smoke and increasing heat, causing him to retreat from the motor home. Meanwhile, the police officers attempted to pull the man out the rear window of the motor home. After regaining his breath, Officer Donahue re-entered the motor home a second time in another attempt to rescue the man. He was immediately confronted by the intense flames and heat of the fire and yielded only when the heat and smoke became too much to bear. Officer Donahue received burns to his arm, ear, and head. In spite of the efforts of all officers involved, the man could not be saved, perishing in the fire.

James D. Dougherty

Assistant State Forest Ranger

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/19/1970

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 19, 1970, Assistant State Forest Ranger James D Dougherty performed and extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his own personal safety and life by saving the life of an individual trapped inside a century-old mine shaft. Five Division of Forestry employees were awarded the Medal of Valor for their participation in what was described as the "Most difficult and dangerous operation of rescuing an unconscious man." 130 feet below the surface and 2000 feet from the entrance of the century-old Hazard Mine on Volcano Creek near Foresthill in Placer County, California The incident occurred when Clifford J Cox, age 60, one of the mine owners and his nephew, Richard Ward, entered the mine on an exploration trip Mr Cox was apparently overcome by lack of air and fell unconscious, the younger Mr. Ward barely escaped himself Mr Ward summoned help from the Foresthill Forest Fire Station. Assistant State Forest Rangers Campbell, Dougherty, Fire Apparatus Engineers Hamilton, Quigley and Fire Fighter Mower responded to the call for help.

Charles Downing

Officer

California Highway Patrol

6/15/1978

Special Act Award (Gold)

A truck loaded with 1,000 gallons of propane was coming down the grade from Crestline and lost its brakes, hurtling through the heart of San Bernardino at a high speed. Two motorcycle officers who spotted the runaway, rode ahead through signal intersections to clear traffic from the truck's path. Officer Downing overtook the truck in his patrol car and eased the truck to a stop with his cruiser by letting the truck hit against the car's rear bumper. Had the truck crashed the resulting explosion could have leveled a city block

Earl Doyle

Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

6/25/1973

Special Act Award (Gold)

Highway Patro man Earl Doyle was patrolling the Sacramento freeways late one afternoon when he saw a car cross the divider, enter the opposing traffic lanes, and crash into a pickup truck. The truck caught fire The officer immediately radioed for fire trucks and an ambulance. Four citizens and Highway Patro man George Olinares stopped and offered to he p Officer Doyle attempted to enter through the doors to extract the unconscious driver, but both doors were either locked or jammed. He kicked in the right side window, however by this time the fire had grown in intensity and spread to the right side of the vehicle, driving Officer Doyle away Officers Doyle and Olinares emptied their fire extinguishers on the flames and the civi ians present also emptied their fire extinguishers on the fire, however it was too intense and the portable extinguishers had no effect on the intense heat and force of the fire. It continued to gain in intensity Being driven away from both doors, Officers Doyle and two citizens c imbed onto the hood of the pickup and attempted to pull the victim out through the windshield. Officer Doyle and the other citizen pulled the victim partially out over the dashboard, but his legs were caught inside The other three men were attempting to free the victim's legs by reaching into the burning vehicle, however at this time the fire and heat became too intense, the flames were at least 10 feet high. All were driven back The victim fell back against the seat and then the interior of the cab began to burn. The victim's hair and c othing near his back and arm caught on fire. A citizen removed his shirt and threw it over the head of the victim. Officer Doy e used his uniform jacket to beat the flames away from the victim in the hope of keeping him alive until the fire trucks arrived The actual contact of the flames roused the victim who suddenly stood up near the windshield opening. At this point there was a combined effort by all the rescuers who rushed forward again, despite the heat and flames, and grabbed whatever they could of the victim - arms, trousers, etc and jerked him out Officer Doyle with the assistance of others, saved an accident victim from burning to death.

Michael Dragoo

State Park Ranger

Department of Parks and Recreation

7/3/1986

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 3, 1986, Ranger Michael Dragoo rushed to the scene after being alerted that two boys were caught in the swift current of the Sacramento River. Seeing only one boy, he ran down a steep embankment and immediately swam out to the youth, reaching him just as the boy went under the water. In spite of muscle cramps and the boy's dog climbing on to his back and scratching him, Ranger Dragoo held on to the young boy until a rescue boat reached them

Thomas Draper

Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

1/9/1980

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 12:10, Sergeant Thomas C. Draper responded to a call to close the Camino Capistrano road near the city of San Juan Capistrano due to reported flooding. As he approached the flooded area, Sergeant Draper observed a vehicle being swept off the roadway and a man and woman being ejected into the water. After alerting headquarters, Sergeant Draper drove his vehicle to a small bridge that traversed the creek and positioned himself prone on the bridge with the intent of catching the victims as they were swept downstream. As the victims passed beneath him, Sergeant Draper, with his legs hooked around the railing support and his upper body extended over the water, grasped the arm of the male for a few moments, only to have the force of the water pull them apart. Sergeant Draper returned to his patrol vehicle and raced down a muddy, water-covered dirt road to a point where the creek curved slightly. Observing the woman clinging to a very thin piece of vegetation, Sergeant Draper removed his belt and ignoring the eroding bank and swift current, slowed edged his way towards the now hysterical woman. He attempted to have her grab his belt, but because of her fear, she would not release her hold on the branch. Observing the vegetation was beginning to break loose, Sergeant Draper with complete disregard to his own safety, entered the raging stream, grabbed the woman and pulled her up the quickly eroding embankment.

Danny Dube

Caltrans Electrician II

Department of Transportation

2/7/2023

Special Service Award (Silver)

Just before noon on February 7, 2023, Caltrans Electrician II Danny Dube was conducting preventative maintenance work along Interstate 5 in Siskiyou County. While traveling southbound in the Anderson Grade area, north of Yreka, Mr. Dube drove around a corner and encountered a vehicle that had rolled over into the center divider, just off the fog line. Mr. Dube had to brake suddenly to prevent hitting the vehicle. He pulled over to assist where he quickly assessed the woman in the vehicle to ensure she did not have significant or life-threatening injuries. He helped pull her from the vehicle with the assistance of another motorist who had also stopped to help. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Dube moved his truck to serve as a barrier to oncoming traffic and contacted dispatch personnel to alert them of the incident. CHP and other emergency personnel soon arrived on the scene. Without Mr. Dube's quick thinking and selfless actions, this situation could have been far more dire. The location of the flipped vehicle was very close to fast-moving interstate traffic and on a blind corner, and the possibility of another vehicle colliding with the involved or assisting parties was very high. With the assistance of the other motorist, Mr. Dube helped secure the scene and helped the woman move to safety before emergency personnel arrived. While Mr. Dube did not have any noted effects from the incident and the woman in the vehicle escaped with minor abrasions, the incident could have turned out far worse without this brave heroic service. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation, Caltrans Electrician II Danny Dube for his heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Michael D. Dunlap

Highway Patrolman

California Highway Patrol

5/9/1969

Special Act Award (Gold)

Highway Patrolman Michael D. Dunlap climbed atop a burning vehicle to extricate five passengers from another blazing car welded into a fiery, six vehicle smash-up. With gas tanks and tires exploding around him, Officer Dunlap tried to force the twisted door, but it wouldn't open. The officer then pulled the five trapped passengers out through a window. Eight people were injured in the six car crash. Two died of burns. Officer Dunlap's face, right hand and forearm were seriously burned during the dangerous rescue.

Vernon Dupper

Forestry Equipment Operator

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

10/3/1958

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October, 3, 1958, Forestry Equipment Operator Vernon L. Dupper performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great personal risk to his own safety and life. While working on the Norum fire near Monrovia, Mr. Dupper was operating one of three bulldozers being led by two "swampers" in the construction of a line up along ridge on the east side of the fire. At about five in the afternoon, the fire was burning in the canyon west of these men, making their positions unsafe. The second Los Angeles County fire dozer was able to return down the completed section of line just minutes before the fire fanned the line. Dupper, unable to follow the first dozer to safety, was preparing to follow the second dozer back down the hill after it became obvious that the fast traveling fire would cross the entire line. At this point, though he realized that the bulldozer he was operating provided the only protection available to the two swampers who didn't have a chance to outrun the fire on foot. Giving up his last opportunity to retreat down the hill, he returned to the two men on foot who were now surrounded by fire. The three crawled under the machine for the protection it afforded. Though all were badly burned the quick thinking, courage and unselfishness of Vernon L. Dupper saved the other two men from almost certain death.

Jason Dyer

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

10/25/2019

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 25, 2019, Fire Captain Jason Dyer was assigned as Division Group Supervisor on the Kincaid Fire in the Sonoma Lake Napa Unit. Fire Captain Dyer was actively engaged in structure defense operations. While attempting to locate his resources, Fire Captain Dyer found himself at a house that was about to be impacted by fire. He tried to exit the area, but his exit route was cut off by the fire. Fire Captain Dyer returned to the house in order to use it as a temporary refuge while the fire passed. At that point, two people fleeing from the fire drove up to his location. Fire Captain Dyer instructed them to remain with him since their exit was cut off and fire intensity around the house continued to increase. Recognizing the dire situation, Fire Captain Dyer radioed the helicopter coordinator, declared his situation as immediately life-threatening, and requested helicopter water drops. Fire Captain Dyer considered using the house to protect the people from the heat and flames, but, as radiant heat from the fire increased, he decided to use his personal fire shelter to protect them. For approximately 10 minutes, all three of them took refuge in the one-person fire shelter. During this time, embers entered the shelter in areas where it was difficult to maintain a seal. Once the blowing embers died down, Fire Captain Dyer exited the shelter, noticed the house was burning and relocated the three further away. Four helicopters provided approximately sixteen water drops while they were trapped by the fire. Once fire activity subsided, Fire Captain Dyer and the two others were transported to a local hospital and treated for minor injuries. Fire Captain Dyer unselfishly utilized his one-person protective fire shelter to shelter himself and two others, ultimately saving all three of their lives. With no regard for his own safety, Fire Captain Dyer went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Battalion Chief Jason Dyer.

Mark Eaton

Detective

Other

2/5/2010

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

Homicide detectives from the Fresno County Sheriff's Office, including safety personnel from allied agencies in the town of Minkler, attempted to serve a search warrant. The search warrant team, comprised of Detectives Mark Chapman, Mark Eaton, Joel Wahlenmaier and Robert McEwen, approached the house. The other personnel surrounded the perimeter of the home. The team knocked and announced their presence, and demanded entry several times. The team then broke down an exterior porch door to gain entry, however, they discovered another locked door. Detectives again announced their presence and demanded entry, yet the suspect refused. As Detective Wahlenmaier hit the door with a ram, the suspect, who was lying-in-wait, began shooting through the closed door. Detective Wahlenmaier was shot and immediately collapsed. Detective McEwen instinctively covered Detective Wahlenmaier with his own body to protect him from further harm. As the gun battle ensued, Sergeant Lopez and Detective Toscano attempted for several minutes to pull Detective Wahlenmaier from the porch, however, his equipment caught on the door frame. Deputy Harris returned cover fire, allowing other deputies to free Detective Wahlenmaier while the gunfire continued. Deputy Harris sustained an injury to his right eye and the right side of his face from a fragmented bullet fired by the suspect. Deputy Harris continued to return cover fire. As the gun battle continued, it was learned that Fresno County Sheriff's Detective Wahlenmaier was mortally wounded. An additional tragedy was the loss of Reedley Police Officer Javier Bejar who was shot and killed by the suspect while aiding sheriff deputies, as you will hear in the next citation. The standoff ultimately ended when the suspect took his own life.

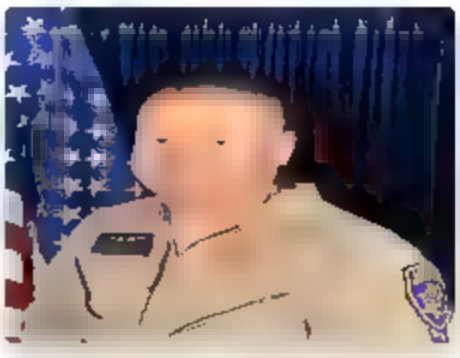
Jeff Edgerton

Sargeant

California Highway Patrol

8/27/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)



At 6 43 a m on August 27, 2020, a private civi ian airp ane was departing from Benton Airpark and crashed just after take-off From his office window, Sergeant Jeff Edgerton noticed that a private airplane was attempting to takeoff at an unusua a titude that was not consistent with sustained flight. He announced to everyone in the office that a p ane was about to crash and multiple employees exited the office towards the runway The airplane departed the runway comp ex, crossed P acer Street, and crashed into a steep, brush-filled ravine. Lieutenant Michael Berry and other Air Ops personne entered their patrol vehicles and immediately responded to the scene Sergeant Edgerton arrived on scene within approximately one to two minutes of the crash and proceeded down the steep embankment to the crash site One group of officers found the first victim about ten feet from the burning fuse age And another few officers found a second victim, roughly 20 feet from the flaming aircraft Officer Pohrman utilized a patrol vehic e fire extinguisher to put out the fire on and around the second victim. Once the fire was mostly out, they moved the second victim further from the fuselage in time to avoid the aircraft's onboard oxygen tank's secondary exp osion Two officers were successful in keeping the fire from engulfing the first victim. Sergeant Edgerton helped two officers pull the first victim away from the burning aircraft and brush Sergeant Edgerton continued to search for other victims and coordinated with Lieutenant Berry to perform a systematic grid search. Unfortunately, the on y two other occupants of the aircraft remained trapped inside and perished. Sergeant Edgerton and the CHP personnel carried the injured victims up the steep embankment and coordinated scene management with allied agencies. The wife of the pi ot who perished in the crash arrived on scene and Sergeant Edgerton arranged for a chaplain to respond for her. With no regard for his own safety, Sergeant Edgerton went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Va or to Ca ifornia Highway Patrol Sergeant Jeff Edgerton

Jeff Edson

Fire Apparatus Engineer

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

11/18/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)

On November 8, 2018, the Camp Fire started above the community of Pulga and was the deadliest, most destructive fire in California history. California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Jeff Edson and Fire Apparatus Engineer Elliot Hopkins were on duty at Jarbo Gap. As they made their way to the intersection of Concow Road and Hoffman Road, spot fires were beginning to establish around the area. They decided to go down Hoffman Road to alert and evacuate residents, using the truck's public announcement system to advise residents to evacuate and pulling into driveways to encourage residents to leave. Spot fires were now established across Concow Lake and below Sawmill Lookout as Captain Edson and Engineer Hopkins reached the last house on Hoffman Road and realized they should head back out. As they traveled back down Hoffman Road, they encountered an injured woman standing in the road. They placed her in the back seat of the truck and continued on. The numerous spot fires had grown together by this time and the winds were intense. The fire was burning along both sides of Hoffman Road and the smoke was so thick that it completely obscured the road, forcing them to rely on the GPS system to navigate through the smoke. As they reached a creek crossing, four men warned that the road ahead was blocked and there was no way out. Cars started to back up behind their truck. Captain Edson realized that they needed to take advantage of the creek as a temporary refuge. Captain Edson and Engineer Hopkins worked to gather as many people as they could and escorted get them into the creek. As the fire grew more intense, Engineer Hopkins made one last trip up the line of cars, using both his own and Captain Edson's fire shelters to shield people from the extreme heat as he brought them back to the shelter of the creek. While dozens of individuals took temporary shelter in the creek, Captain Edson returned to the truck and coordinated by radio with a bulldozer to clear Hoffman Road. With the bulldozer working to clear the road, Captain Edson and Engineer Hopkins began getting people out of the creek and into any vehicle that would still run, cramming as many pets and people as they could into each vehicle. The fire was so intense that some of the vehicles caught fire as they began driving out. Captain Edson and Engineer Hopkins were the last to leave the creek. Arriving at the safety area being built by the bulldozer, they realized it was not big enough and chose to escort the survivors to a safer location. Once the survivors' safety was ensured, Captain Edson and Engineer Hopkins returned to the fire line, where they assisted with the rescue of a civilian with severe burn injuries. With no regard for his own safety, Captain Edson went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Jeff Edson

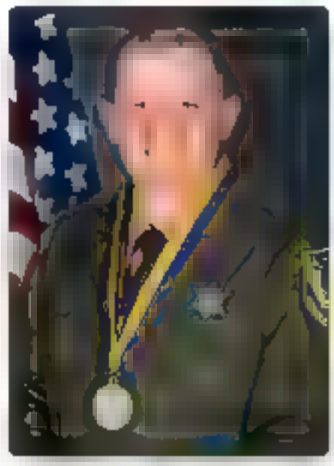
Chad M. Edwards

Game Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

9/15/2014

Special Service Award (Silver)



On September 15, 2014, at 1:30 p.m. a brush fire was ignited on the outskirts of Weed, California by an arsonist. The fire, fanned by 40 mph winds, spread into town where it burned more than 150 homes, the lumber mill, several churches, and other structures in a matter of a few hours. Department of Fish and Wildlife Warden Chad Edwards heard the radio traffic regarding the fire and immediately responded to the area. He started evacuating homes as flames ripped up the hill and into the neighborhood. Warden Edwards immediately began transporting people in the bed of his truck, and flagged down other evacuees with empty seats in their cars to help shuttle people out. Warden Edwards frantically worked to help a family out of their home while the houses next door and down the street were burning. During this time, Warden Edwards suddenly heard a loud roaring sound and looked up in time to see an air tanker flying overhead, dropping a load of retardant. Warden Edwards made it into his patrol truck just in time, as the retardant drop covered his vehicle. Retardant drops hit Warden Edward's patrol vehicle on two more occasions that afternoon. At one point Warden Edwards noticed an elderly woman on her front porch and he stopped to ask if she needed help. The woman said that she did not have a vehicle, and her family was cut off by the fire and could not get to her. Warden Edwards gathered the woman and her dog, and took them to safety. During the evacuations, Warden Edwards noticed a Siskiyou County Sheriff's Department patrol car parked in the driveway of a residence in the burning neighborhood. Warden Edwards had dispatch contact the Deputy, who said that his dog was in the house. The Deputy told Warden Edwards that if it looked like the house was going to burn, to do whatever he needed to get his dog out. The house next door was on fire, so Warden Edwards kicked in the door and grabbed the dog to take it to safety. By making trip after trip into the burning neighborhood to evacuate and rescue stranded citizens, Warden Edwards acted with bravery that afternoon that was clearly above and beyond that expected in the line of duty. Amazingly, no lives were lost in the fire, and it is without doubt that Warden Edwards' actions were a large part of that outcome.

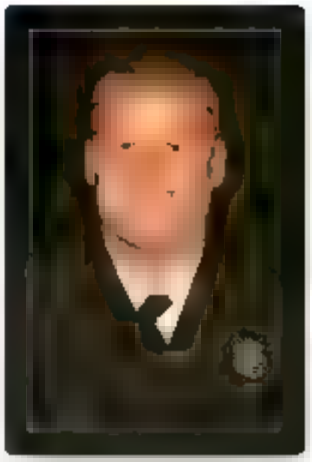
Kyle Efflandt

Firefighter I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

5/22/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)



On May 22, 2008, the crew on Engine 1675 was assigned to Division "O" on the Summit fire, which was burning in Santa Clara and Santa Cruz Counties. At approximately 9 45 am, the crew was requested to go to a residence on Dove Lane to search for a previously evacuated resident who was last seen running back up his driveway toward his residence. Despite great personal risk, the crew drove to the residence. The fire was "crowning" and burning intensely in the heavy vegetation on both sides of the access road, and the winds were blowing at 40 to 50 miles per hour. When the crew arrived at the residence driveway, the flames were so intense that they could not drive any further, so they backed up to a safe area and positioned the engine for a quick evacuation. Captain Gibble instructed Firefighter Efflandt to stay with the engine to act as a lookout for increased fire behavior and other hazards while he and Firefighters Hollowell and Blythe headed up the driveway on foot to search for the missing resident. Exposed to intense heat and smoke from the burning residence and with nearby propane tanks venting and blowing up in ground-shaking explosions, the crew retreated from the residence only after a thorough search of the area and repeated attempts to garner a response from the resident failed It was later determined that the resident had fled to safety. The crew from Engine 1675 is to be commended for their dedication to duty and service despite the great danger to their personal safety The State of California takes great pride in presenting Fire Captain Rick Lee Gibble, and Firefighters Steven W B ythe, Kyle Efflandt, and Ryan Ho owell , these Gold Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service

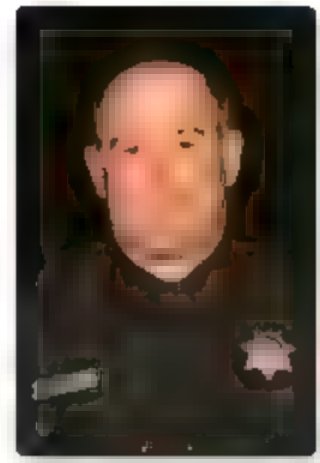
Ron Eldridge

Fire Captain Specialist, Fresno-Kings Administrative Unit

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/25/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)



On the morning of Thursday, February 25, 2010, CAL FIRE employees Craig Tolmie and Ron Eldridge, along with Law Enforcement Officers from the CAL FIRE Fresno-Kings Unit and the Fresno County Sheriff's Department, were serving a search warrant at a residence in the community of Minkler. A man at the residence was suspected of setting eleven arson fires and shooting at inhabited dwellings in which a citizen was injured by gunfire. While attempting to serve the warrant, the suspect fired upon Officers from inside the residence. A detective was wounded and trapped on the front porch. Officers returned gunfire and quickly developed a rescue plan to retrieve the wounded detective. Under continuous gunfire from the residence, another officer on scene crawled from his position of cover to the porch while Captain Eldridge returned gunfire at the suspect. Captain Eldridge saw that the wounded detective was caught on a fence as the other officer was trying to drag him out to safety. Captain Eldridge, at great risk to himself, left his position of cover, moved forward into the open, and exposed himself to the suspect's gunfire. While he continued to fire his weapon at the suspect, Captain Eldridge helped free the wounded detective, and with the other officer pulled the detective to a safe position. Meanwhile, Chief Tolmie was in a position of cover behind a vehicle parked directly in front of the suspect's residence, when he heard a Deputy call for a bandoleer of shotgun ammunition from within a patrol car. Knowing that the Deputy was at risk, Chief Tolmie left his position of cover and moved through the open area, directly exposing himself to gunfire. Chief Tolmie retrieved the bandoleer and a shotgun lying on the ground and delivered them to the Deputy, putting himself at great personal risk to help a fellow officer. The State of California takes great pride in presenting to Chief Craig Tolmie and Captain Ron Eldridge, these Gold Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Stephen T. Elias

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

11/5/2010

Special Service Award (Silver)

On November 5, 2010, at approximately 9:30 a.m. Caltrans Equipment Operator II Stephen T. Elias and Caltrans Maintenance Worker Gregory K Englund were travelling to the Truckee Maintenance Station on Interstate 80. Near the Boreal exit, the truck in front of them suddenly veered sideways, flipped over and rolled three times until coming to rest on its passenger side on the freeway shoulder. The passenger was partially ejected and his head and neck were pinned between the ground and the roof of the truck. Mr. Elias was driving the Caltrans vehicle, he pulled over and called in the accident while Mr. Englund put flares around the area. Mr. Elias placed the vehicle in position to protect the accident scene and set up an arrow board to direct traffic. Mr. Elias and Mr. Englund then ran to assist the seriously injured victim. Mr. Englund and Mr. Elias managed to lift the truck bed up, allowing the victim to breathe and regain consciousness. Two CHP Officers arrived on the scene a ong with two others who witnessed the accident. Between the six men they kept the victim alive by holding the truck up and off his head and neck for approximately 15 minutes. The Fire Rescue arrived with blocking devices to stabilize the truck, however, the men had to continue holding the truck bed up as the truck was slipping off the blocks while rescue personnel tried to remove the victim. The victim was ultimately extricated with the Jaws of Life, transported by helicopter to a hospital and has since made a full recovery.

Brian Elledge

Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/2/2006

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the afternoon of December 2, 2006, California Highway Patro Officer Brian Elledge was on patro with his partner, Officer Lockhart, in Contra Costa Co nty on State Route 242 when they came upon a co ision They discovered a car off the roadway in a thicket of bushes with a small fire burning in the engine compartment. The officers earned from a witness at the scene that the driver of the car was still inside and unable to exit the vehicle on his own. Officer Lockhart immediately removed the fire extinguisher from the patrol car as Officer E edge went to the burning vehicle to help the trapped man escape. While Officer Elledge was trying to access the burning car, the fire spread from the engine compartment to the passenger compartment, causing the victim to scream for help. Officer E edge broke the driver side window with his baton but was unable to see into the car because of smoke, and flames began to ignite the interior of the car, making rescue efforts even more difficult. Officer Elledge found the disoriented man trying to climb from the back seat over the front seat when he realized the man's legs and back were on fire. Officer Elledge's jacket sleeve ignited as he pulled the man out of the burning car. He then placed the injured man on the ground and began extinguishing the flames of the victim with his hands and dirt, while Officer Lockhart doused the flames with the extinguisher. The driver received second and third degree burns to his hands, legs, and head and was taken to the hospital where he made a full recovery Officer Elledge's actions during this rescue were responsib e for saving the man's life

Ken Eller

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/18/1987

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 18, 1987, at approximately 2:20 p.m., Fire Captains Ken Eller and Mike Velasquez observed smoke half a mile south of the Piedra Forest Fire Station. Upon arrival, they found the trunk portion of a vehicle on fire and a grass fire around the vehicle. They were unable to see the driver due to the fire and smoke. Hearing cries, Fire Captains Eller and Velasquez braved the flames without protective gear and approached the vehicle. While Fire Captain Velasquez worked to free the driver's trapped leg, Captain Eller covered her face with protective clothing. Within a few minutes they were able to extricate her from the burning vehicle and after moving her to safety, administered basic life support.

Kenneth Ellis

Fire Fighter II

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/21/2023

Special Service Award (Silver)

On February 21, 2023, the Santa Cruz Mountains were experiencing another winter storm in a season of consecutive atmospheric rivers. While this storm had less precipitation than previous ones, local winds were steady at 36 miles per hour, with gusts up to 50 miles per hour. Many trees in the area had been weakened by previous storms, and trees more than 100 feet tall were falling, damaging structures and making roadways impassable. CAL FIRE Engine 1760, staffed by Fire Captain Josh Clark and Fire Fighter IIs Kenneth Ellis and Kyle Callaway were asked to assist the neighboring Boulder Creek Fire Department with a report of a tree that had fallen onto a house and trapped a victim inside. Engine 1760 and Boulder Creek Fire units arrived at the residence that was badly damaged. The top of a redwood tree that was over 10 feet in length and 12 inches in diameter had broken off and fallen through the roof of the home and continued through the floor, trapping a young toddler underneath. The toddler's pelvis was pinned between the tree and the badly damaged floor. Trees and other debris continued to fall from unknown directions all around, threatening the rescuers' lives. Captain Clark, Firefighters Ellis and Callaway and the Boulder Creek firefighters worked from the rooftop and inside the home to stabilize the structure's roof and floor and remove the tree while also monitoring the toddler. The toddler was fading in and out of consciousness and his condition continued to deteriorate. The crew decided to free him before the entire tree could be removed, which presented a particularly technical challenge. They had to relieve the log's weight from the toddler while preventing the roof from caving in. In an effort that can only be described as brute strength, Firefighters Ellis and Callaway lifted the remaining tree section just enough for another firefighter to pull the toddler out from underneath. Due to the weather conditions and rapid wind gusts, a helicopter air ambulance was not able to respond, so the toddler was escorted by firefighters, paramedics and sheriff deputies to a trauma center where he underwent multiple surgeries for associated injuries. Fire Captain Clark, Firefighters Ellis and Callaway and the Boulder Creek Fire Department displayed instinctual courage in this dynamic and hazardous environment. The toddler's dad shared, "If everybody wasn't doing their job, I don't know if he'd be alive or not." The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire Fighter II Kenneth Ellis for his heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Eric V. Emery

Lifeguard

Department of Parks and Recreation

1/26/1969

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 26, 1969, Life Guard Supervisor Knut B. Skjonberg and Lifeguards Eric V. Emery and Jerry L Bennette responded to cries from a young man who had entered the rain swollen Santa Ana River to ride an inner tube and was quickly being carried out to sea. Dubbed the "worst storm in over thirty years", the river was running bank to bank with an accumulation of mud, debris, trees, rattlesnakes and even spiders, all trapped in the swirling waters. The three men, noting the peril confronting the screaming, panic stricken youth, unhesitatingly forged their way through the churning mass of murky water. Clawing their way over logs and swimming wherever possible, the three reached the youth and pulled, tugged, and towed him to safety. Due to the extremely polluted water and the cuts and bruises incurred during the rescue, all had to be medically treated and inoculated against disease

Loren Emnott

Class Title: Unknown

Department of Transportation

12/30/1985

Special Service Award (Silver)

On December 30, 1985 Loren Emnott, together with another Ca Trans worker, saved an unconscious man from a cabin fi ed with carbon monoxide produced from an unventi ated generator. Mr. Emnot risked his own hea th and safety to help rescue the victim.

Gregory K. Englund

Caltrans Maintenance Worker

Department of Transportation

11/5/2010

Special Service Award (Silver)

On November 5, 2010, at approximately 9:30 a.m., Caltrans Equipment Operator II Stephen T. Elias and Caltrans Maintenance Worker Gregory K. Englund were traveling to the Truckee Maintenance Station on Interstate 80. Near the Boreal exit, the truck in front of them suddenly veered sideways, flipped over and rolled three times until coming to rest on its passenger side on the freeway shoulder. The passenger was partially ejected and his head and neck were pinned between the ground and the roof of the truck. Mr. Elias was driving the Caltrans vehicle; he pulled over and called in the accident while Mr. Englund put flares around the area. Mr. Elias placed the vehicle in position to protect the accident scene and set up an arrow board to direct traffic. Mr. Elias and Mr. Englund then ran to assist the seriously injured victim. Mr. Englund and Mr. Elias managed to lift the truck bed up, allowing the victim to breathe and regain consciousness. Two CHP Officers arrived on the scene along with two others who witnessed the accident. Between the six men they kept the victim alive by holding the truck up and off his head and neck for approximately 15 minutes. The Fire Rescue arrived with blocking devices to stabilize the truck, however, the men had to continue holding the truck bed up as the truck was slipping off the blocks while rescue personnel tried to remove the victim. The victim was ultimately extricated with the Jaws of Life, transported by helicopter to a hospital and has since made a full recovery.

Giles Engstrom

Foundation Driller

Department of Transportation

11/8/1972

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of November 8, 1972, Giles Engstrom, a Foundation Driller with District One, succeeded in saving the life of a Fortuna, California man involved in a fiery crash near Alton, California. The driver had lost control of his truck and crashed through the guard railing of the Van Duzen River Bridge, hitting the riverbed, landed upside down and burst into flames. The man was semiconscious and was lying part way through the open door of the cab, trapped in his burning pickup truck. Mr. Engstrom and a commercial truck driver had been following the driver on the highway. During the rescue operation, there was not only the possibility that the burning vehicle would explode, but the driver had also been carrying a considerable amount of ammunition containers that were discharging from within the truck. Nevertheless, Mr. Engstrom started out to rescue the driver, and the commercial truck driver ran to assist him. Both men approached to within a foot of flames rising eight feet from the ground. The heat was intense. Mr. Engstrom and the other rescuer quickly sprayed themselves with flame retardant from a fire extinguisher, then ran over and sprayed the victim with the retardant and safely removed him from the blazing pickup truck. Mr. Engstrom sustained minor burns, but both men were fortunate they did not get struck by all the projectiles flying around as they pulled the man from the cab, which quickly thereafter became engulfed in flames. In addition to the state's Medal of Valor, Mr Engstrom was presented with a letter of Commendation from the Public Works Director, a Certificate of Commendation by the Highway Patrol, and the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission Award for his heroic acts. Mr. Engstrom highly deserved all the accolades for his courage in saving another's life.

April Esconde

Wildlife Officer

Department of Fish and Wildlife

6/2/2020

Special Service Award (Silver)

On June 2, 2020, Wildlife Officer April Esconde was on patrol at the Naval Amphibious Base Coronado training beaches located in the City of Coronado. As she was driving south on the beach towards the Silver Strand State Beach, she heard someone screaming. With the aid of her binoculars, Officer Esconde observed a woman caught in a rip tide. As she drove to the beach, she advised dispatch to send lifeguards to her location. Upon arrival, a man approached Officer Esconde, pointed out towards the surf and told her that someone was in trouble. Officer Esconde contacted dispatch and asked for a State Park lifeguard to come to her location. Officer Esconde waited but did not hear sirens or lights from a State Park vehicle. Officer Esconde looked back towards the victim, who was still struggling in the surf. Not wanting to wait any longer, Officer Esconde removed her safety equipment, stowed it in her vehicle and rushed to the woman's aid. Officer Esconde swam out to the struggling victim and pulled her back to shallower waters. The woman thanked Officer Esconde and said she was okay on her own. However, once Officer Esconde let go of her, she started to flounder in the water. Officer Esconde grabbed the woman again and escorted her to the shoreline where State Park lifeguards were waiting. The responding lifeguard checked the victim for injures and asked if she needed additional medical assistance, but the victim refused and left the scene. With no regard for her own safety, Officer Esconde went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Fish and Wildlife Officer April Esconde

Robert A. Espagnolle

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/19/1968

Special Act Award (Gold)

Officer Robert A Espagnolle was working at a truck scale about a half mile south of Terra Linda, Marin County, when a man ran across Highway 101 to say a man was trapped in a burning tunnel. A fellow officer moved to radio for a fire truck as Officer Espagnolle ran to the fire. Debris and gasoline were burning on the surface of the water. Officer Espagnolle immediately waded in 25 to 30 feet, splashing water ahead of him to extinguish the flames Visibility was almost zero because of smoke and flames Finding the victim, a 63 year old workman, the officer assisted him from the tunnel by placing one arm about his neck and using his other hand to splash flames away while wading out. Both men were hospitalized, the workman for first and second degree burns and Officer Espagnolle for first degree burns of his left hand and arm, extreme hypertension and a prolonged reaction from lack of oxygen.

Michael Christopher Estey

Officer

California Highway Patrol

6/6/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 6, 2020 the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office responded to a call reporting the discovery of illegal weapons and bomb-making materials in an unattended van. At approximately 2:20 p.m., Santa Cruz County Deputies Emma Ramponi and Alex Spencer, along with their Sergeant, Damon Gutzwiller, responded to the scene when they were rapidly ambushed by a subject who began shooting at them from an elevated position. Unknown to them, the subject had recently killed a federal security officer in Oakland and was part of a domestic terrorist organization. Regrettably, Sergeant Gutzwiller was struck by gunfire and suffered a fatal wound. The first allied agency to arrive in the area was the California Highway Patrol with Officers Michael Christopher Estey and Luis Rodriguez. Officer Estey drove the patrol vehicle while Officer Rodriguez navigated to the last known location of the deputies and sergeant. As the officers approached, they too were immediately met with gunfire from the subject, striking their moving patrol vehicle several times. Due to the narrow road and the steep hill on the passenger side, the CHP patrol vehicle was pressed tightly against the hillside. Officer Rodriguez could not open his passenger door, but he saw through his side-view mirror the subject carefully approaching his side of the patrol vehicle, holding a rifle. Officer Rodriguez drew his duty pistol and leaned out of the passenger window while Officer Estey positioned himself to engage the subject with his department-issued firearm, leading to an officer-involved shooting. Thanks to the heroic actions of Officers Estey and Rodriguez, the subject was wounded in the torso and elbow. He retreated from the tactical advantage, fled the scene and was later apprehended by a courageous member of the Ben Lomond community. Although their patrol vehicle was riddled with bullets, Officer Rodriguez was physically unharmed, and Officer Estey received wounds to his hands from metal fragments. Both officers exhibited astonishing courage, decisiveness, presence of mind and swift action that according to the Santa Cruz County District Attorney, saved lives. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol, Officer Michael Christopher Estey for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

John Ewald

Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

2/10/1996

Special Service Award (Silver)

On February 10, 1996, at approximately 12:30 p.m., Patrol Lieutenant Doug Huckins, Wardens Gary Combes and John Ewald, and a U. S. Coast Guard Petty Officer were patrolling the waters off the Santa Cruz coastline in their patrol boat "Bluefin" when they overheard a radio call describing a capsized boat approximately two and a half miles from their location. Multiple victims were reported to be in the water. Within 15 minutes the crew arrived to find an overturned boat in the surf line. Several people were in the frigid water, including two surfers who paddled out to assist the victims. The crew could see the surfers taking turns holding up four of the five victims. Despite being tossed around by waves as high as 12 feet, Lieutenant Huckins backed the Bluefin just off the surf line within a quarter mile of the beach. Wardens Combes and Ewald launched a rigid hull inflatable skiff and maneuvered into the surf-zone, riding the backs of the dangerous swells. Within minutes they rescued three of the exhausted victims from the 50-degree water and rushed them back to the Bluefin where they were given warm clothing as all were in advanced stages of hypothermia. The victims were airlifted from the patrol boat to a nearby hospital. Meanwhile, the two surfers managed to get another victim to shore, but sadly, the fifth victim drowned.

Ernest Farmer

Fish and Game Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

3/1/1970

Special Act Award (Gold)

In March 1970, Fish and Game Warden Ernest Farmer and his supervisor Lt. Fred Kemp, stopped to assist at the scene of a fiery two car crash on the Napa River Bridge outside Vallejo. As Lt. Kemp went to call authorities, Warden Farmer discovered a critically injured nineteen year old woman trapped in the overturned and flame-engulfed car. Moments after Warden Farmer and a truck driver, who stopped to assist, pulled the woman out of the car, it exploded. The woman survived.

Raymond Faulk

Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/16/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Raymond Faulk, on April 16, 2003, performed an act of heroism at risk to his personal safety in an attempt to prevent a suicidal subject from jumping to her death from a freeway over crossing. At approximately 3:40 p. m. Officer Faulk was in plain clothes and driving his undercover CHP vehicle northbound on SR-1 approaching the Capitola Avenue overpass in the city of Capitola. During the approach to the overpass, Officer Faulk observed a female standing on the south side of the over crossing looking towards the northbound traffic below. She continued to stare at the traffic as Officer Faulk drove under the overpass. Relying on his intuition, keen observation ability, and the knowledge that jumpers have been know to use the overcrossing in the past, Officer Faulk exited State Route 1 at Bay Avenue and proceeded to Capitola Avenue via Soquel Drive to better observe the subject's actions. After arriving and parking east of the Capitola Avenue overpass, Officer Faulk observed the subject on the opposite side of the road approximately 75 feet away. Officer Faulk watched the subject as she continued to stare at the freeway traffic below while smoking a cigarette. After finishing the cigarette, the subject straddled the concrete overpass railing, and let her right leg dangle over traffic. At this time, Officer Faulk exited his vehicle, began to approach the subject and requested assistance from the Capitola Police Department. As Officer Faulk got within approximately five feet of the subject, she suddenly swung her left leg over the railing and began to lower herself into the air over the northbound traffic lanes. Thinking quickly, Officer Faulk lunged forward and immediately grabbed the subject under her arms from behind and pulled her back over the railing and onto the sidewalk to safety. The subject began to struggle with him and yelled for him to let go of her as she was only going to jump later. Due to the ongoing struggle, Officer Faulk retrieved his handcuffs and attempted to handcuff the subject. Upon realizing that Officer Faulk was a peace officer, the subject became very violent and attempted to break Officer Faulk's grasp. Unable to apply the handcuffs, Officer Faulk used his body weight to restrain the subject, at which time she began to quiet down. Officer Faulk was then able to handcuff the subject while waiting for assistance from the Capitola Police Department. The subject was subsequently transported to the Dominican Hospital Mental Health Unit for 72 hour observation.

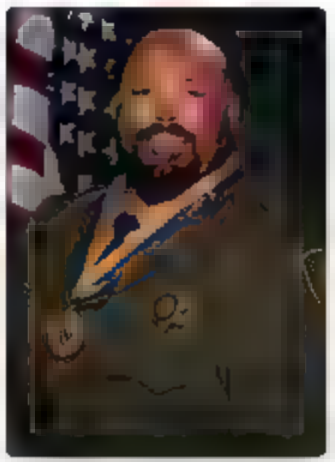
Aaron Featherstone

Correctional Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

5/24/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)



On May 24, 2017 at 10:20 a.m., in the Pelican Bay State Prison outdoor exercise yard, with approximately three hundred inmates, a one-on-one fight started. Correctional officers responded to the fight to stop the incident. While responding staff were attempting to quell the incident, approximately 130 inmates began rushing and attacking the officers. Officer Aaron Featherstone encountered an inmate who attempted to take his expandable baton. Officer Featherstone dodged the inmate's attempt and with the help of another officer, subdued and restrained the inmate. Officer Featherstone saw a group of inmates punching and kicking Officer Paul Hicks, who was on his hands and knees. As he responded to Officer Hicks the inmates moved off, but not before kicking him in the head, knocking him unconscious. Then, Officer Featherstone saw Sergeant Mount being attacked by another group of inmates. Fearing he would be seriously injured, Officer Featherstone responded to him to help. As he approached, he used chemical agents on the group of inmates and a number of them stopped their attack. Inmates rushed toward Officer Featherstone and Sergeant Mount. Officer Featherstone gave orders for the inmates to stop and they complied. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Featherstone's heroic act saved the lives of fellow officers and inmates in the face of a large prison fight. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctional Officer Aaron Featherstone

Hector Feliciano

Los Angeles Police Department Sergeant

Other

11/9/2004

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On November 9, 2004 Sergeant Hector Feliciano of the Los Angeles Police Department took the initiative and led his fellow officers in a hostage rescue situation at the Mexican Consulate in Los Angeles He negotiated with the suspect and used his exemplary marksmanship skills by shooting the suspect who was going to kill his pregnant hostage

Ernest Felio

Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/8/1969

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 8, 1969, California Highway Patrol Officer Ernest Felio was off duty when he came upon the scene of a traffic collision near his residence. A vehicle had collided with a power pole that was carrying several 12,000 volt electrical lines. Due to the collision, several live wires were hanging across the roadway at varying heights. Officer Felio called in the collision and returned to the scene to render medical aid to the severely injured driver. While Officer Felio assisted another CHP officer who had arrived on scene, a teenage resident who lived across the street from the collision came out to see what was happening. Wanting to get closer to the scene and not seeing the downed power lines, the boy began to cross the street. Due to the darkness, the black power lines, and no street lights, the boy inadvertently walked into an energized 12,000 volt power line. Officer Felio looked up to see a bluish flame leap from the boy's head and shoulders upon contacting the wire and then saw him fall to the ground. Officer Felio, realizing the possible consequences of what just happened and without regard for his own safety, ran through and around the energized wires in the darkness to render aid to the boy. When he reached the boy, he found him rigid, unconscious, and not breathing. With some significant effort, Officer Felio was able to open his airway and began mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. After several minutes, the boy finally began to breathe on his own and was transported to the hospital. The boy was released a few days later and made a full recovery. Tragically, Officer Felio died in the line of duty in 1980. Officer Felio's actions, without regard for his personal safety, saved the life of a teenage boy. Officer Felio's widow is here today to accept this award on his behalf. The State of California takes great pride in posthumously awarding Officer Ernest Felio, this Gold Medal of Valor, for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Timothy B. Fellars

California State Park Peace Officer / Ranger

Department of Parks and Recreation

6/22/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 22, 2009, California State Park Peace Officers, Lifeguard James W. Nothhelfer and Ranger Timothy B. Fellars, responded to a report of an overturned boat off the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve near Moss Beach. This area is well known for causing boat accidents due to the hazardous, shallow reef. At approximately 1:00 p.m., Officer Nothhelfer arrived on the scene, put his wetsuit on, and began to paddle out toward the victims. Facing nine foot choppy surf that was closely spaced due to the northwest winds that day and floating debris and gasoline caused from the overturned boat, Officer Nothhelfer made his way out through the rocky reef surf zone approximately 300 yards offshore. Six family members, including a six year old boy, had all been tossed into the 54 degree water when their boat overturned. Gathering five of the six family members together on top of his rescue paddleboard, Officer Nothhelfer was able to locate the sixth member who was clinging to the bow of the boat and brought him back to the paddleboard just before the boat sank. Officer Nothhelfer was able to hold on to all of the family members until Ranger Fellars arrived on the scene to provide additional help. Ranger Fellars, a former Lifeguard with California State Parks, put his wetsuit on and swam out through the same dangerous area to assist Officer Nothhelfer. Despite being hit repeatedly by the surf, together they were able to hold on to the family members until all were transferred to a waiting Patrol boat. After transport to the harbor, five of the family members were transported by ground ambulances to area hospitals and treated for hypothermia. The six year old boy was transported by medical helicopter to an area hospital for severe hypothermia and near drowning. Although tired from their efforts, Officer Nothhelfer and Ranger Fellars were not injured during this strenuous and dangerous ocean rescue.

Jefferey Ferber

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/29/1986

Special Service Award (Silver)

On September 29, 1986, at approximately 1 a.m, Highway Patrol Officer Jeff Ferber and his partner were dispatched to the scene of an early morning traffic accident at Lake Sherwood. A car had plunged into the cold, murky waters of the lake, submerged, and trapped the driver inside. Upon arrival, they discovered that Ventura County Fire Department Captain Kirk Brown and another firefighter had rowed out into the lake and located the vehicle. Though visibility in the water was virtually nonexistent and the condition and stability of the vehicle were unknown, Officer Ferber immediately swam to the vehicle and began diving in an attempt to locate and rescue the driver. Captain Brown also entered the water, and together they eventually reached and removed the driver to safety. Although the driver later died, the courage displayed by this officer and this firefighter in disregarding their own safety by entering the cold, dark waters without waiting for special safety equipment, reflect the highest standard of both professions.

Paul Fernandez

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/28/1988

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 4 15 p.m. on northbound State Ro.te 99 in central Modesto, Officer Pa.l Fernandez joined in the pursuit of a suspect wanted for auto theft and brandishing a firearm. Officer Fernandez immediate y assumed a primary position and remained in close pursuit of the suspect, sometimes reaching speeds of 90 to 95 miles an hour in traffic The suspect lost control of the vehicle when he was unab e to negotiate a 90 degree turn; the vehicle slid approximate y 200 feet before coming to a stop in the parking area of an inn. The suspect abandoned his vehic e and was momentarily detained by a witness who released his grasp when the suspect p aced a pistol to his head. At this point, Officer Fernandez and two other officers exited their vehic es and approached the suspect. The suspect then ran into the office, jumped over the registration co.nter and grabbed the clerk, ho ding the automatic pistol to her head. The suspect screamed obscenities at the officer and stated that he wo.d shoot the c erk In a brief moment when the clerk fainted and the suspect struggled to keep her in an upright position, Officer Fernandez saw his chance, and with total disregard for his own personal safety, .eapt over the counter and onto the suspect. With the assistance of the other officers, the suspect was disarmed and s.bd.ed The suspect had a history of vio.ent behavior and was under the influence of rock cocaine at the time of the incident.

Chester Fields

Resident Engineer

Department of Transportation

1/25/1975

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 25, 1975, Bridge Engineer Chester Fields was driving to the work along Highway 174 near Colfax when he saw a cloud of dust drifting across the roadway. Mr. Fields knew the dust meant that a vehicle had failed to make the curve: he checked and saw skid marks leading to the edge of a steep embankment. Thirty feet below, a car that had rolled several times was now jammed up against a tree. Mr. Fields half fell, half plunged down the steep slope through the underbrush to get to the vehicle. Two boys were trapped in the front seat and three girls in the back seat. Both doors on the left were caved in and could not be opened, both doors on the right were inaccessible because of heavy brush and trees. But the windows were open. The engine compartment burst into flames. Mr. Fields began pulling the injured and stunned teenagers out the window. Mr. Fields moved quickly and in about two minutes all were out of the vehicle. The flames were licking towards the gas tank. Mr. Field moved the injured youngsters about fifty feet away from the brush, seeking safety at the side of the steep slope. Suddenly the car exploded, spewing flaming debris just as Mr. Field was laying the last of the five victims on the ground. Trees and brush caught fire as the flames were spreading. Fortunately, a passing motorist alerted the U. S. Forest Fire Unit and they arrived in time to control the flames. All five teenagers survived the fiery incident thanks to Mr. Chester Fields.

Donald Finn

Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/28/1996

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 2 46 a.m. a tractor/trailer driven co ided with another tractor/trailer which had slowed down due to a previous traffic co ision at Interstate 10 and Ho t Boulevard. The collision involved a tractor/trai er and two passenger vehicles. The driver had dozed off, unaware of the s ow moving traffic and had not taken any evasive action to prevent an accident. His vehic e then veered to the left into the number two and three lanes. The tractor/trailer, still out of control, struck five passenger vehicles and passed two tractor/trailers colliding with the rear trai er of a set of double trailers in the number four lane. The tractor burst into flames. His legs were trapped by the dashboard and engine components which co lapsed upon impact. Officers on the scene broadcasted the collision into the Inland Communications Center and went to the aid of the drivers in the passenger cars unaware the driver of the burning tractor was still inside. Officers He er, Avila, Finn and Batt e responded to the scene and upon arrive heard the trapped driver's cries for he p and saw the flames rapidly spreading from the tractor to the trailer, as we as to the trai er it had struck. The officers attempted to open the driver's side door to free the driver but the severity of the collision left the door twisted and jammed closed. The officer tried to reassure the driver as they reached into the burning truck, gasping the driver's shoulders and arms in an attempt to pu him free. As Officers Finn and Battle attempted to free the driver, Officers Heller and Avila doused the trapped driver with fire extinguishers and attempted to pull the jammed door open. The flames were spreading rapidly through the cab of the truck to the s eeper berth and upholstery. The driver was sti conscious and calling for he p. The entire right side of the tractor, its trailer, and the trailer it had struck were on fire. The tractor's fuel tank had ruptured and was rushing down the traffic lanes towards the other vehicles. The officer continued their efforts to free the trapped driver as the flames spread. All four officers remained with the driver, still trying to free him and extinguish the flames. After depleting several fire extinguishers and unable to pry the tractor door open, they were forced to move to a p ace of safety due to the intensity of the fire. At this point, the tractor and trailer were fu y engulfed, with flames reaching 30 to 40 feet in the air. Unfortunately, the driver co d not be saved and sustained fatal injuries from the collision and fire.

Zachariah Fishell

Officer

Other

5/10/2011

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On May 10, 2011, at 5 50 p m , Officer Zachariah Fishe was on routine patrol driving his marked police unit through a bustling Riverside residential neighborhood. Suddenly, Officer Fishell heard gunshots and within ninety-seconds he located the origin of the gunfire. One victim had already been shot and as concerned neighbors stood in their yards, Officer Fishell found the "active shooter" suspect who was sti firing his weapon. Officer Fishe could not wait for assistance and he courageously approached the house where he could see the suspect shooting a second victim who lay prone on the ground. Officer Fishell immediate y engaged the active shooter suspect and fired his service revolver at the suspect who then stopped his deadly attack on the second victim The suspect hid behind a large truck in an attempt to find out where the single shot had come from Officer Fishell continued to advance the suspect who crossed the street and was running towards residential homes. Officer Fishe believed the active shooter suspect wou d enter one of the houses and continue his deadly attacks against additional innocent residents. Although still thirty yards away, Officer Fishell fired three rounds and mortally wounded the advancing suspect. Tragically, both shooting victims died at the scene.

Officer Fishell's heroic actions reflected one of law enforcement's fundamental duties which ca upon officers to protect the peaceful against violence and disorder

Bennie Fisher

EDD Unemployment Insurance Program Representative

Employment Development Department

6/30/1986

Special Service Award (Silver)

On June 30, 1986, in the San Francisco Office of the Employment Development Department, unemployment insurance division, employee Bennie Fisher, along with three additional EDD personnel, struggled with an armed gunman, at a great threat to his safety and life, managed to help disarm the distraught man who was trying to shoot another EDD employee within their vicinity. Mr. Fisher's courage to tackle a highly emotional, potentially explosive individual brandishing a gun put his life in jeopardy. Not only was he instrumental in saving the life of the intended shooting victim, but also prevented the threat of additional injuries or death to all the other employees in the office.

Bill Fisher

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

3/10/1995

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 10, 1995, at approximately 9 p.m. during a 36-hour winter storm affecting the coastal City of Morro Bay, CDF Fire Captain Bill Fisher, a swift-water rescue instructor for CDF/County Fire was summoned to lead the rescue of a victim who was stranded 50 yards from the closest bank and clinging precariously to a debris pile in the mouth of Morro Creek. Captain Fisher performed extraordinary acts of heroism at great personal risk to his safety and life. Access to the victim was impeded by swift water waves, tidal surges, and floating debris, including whole trees. Due to inclement weather, a helicopter rescue was not possible. Captain Fisher, despite feeling ill, donned his rescue equipment and along with a Harbor Department lifeguard, began the arduous task of rescuing the victim from the debris pile. Captain Fisher and the lifeguard entered the water in tandem to support each other against the swift current, and cautiously waded out to the victim. Once they reached the victim they were able to tie a rope to the debris pile. A Zodiac boat was tethered to another rope and sent over to the rescuers. Fisher and the lifeguard placed a life jacket on the victim, loaded him into the boat, and all were pulled to the safety of the shore by support personnel. All the while during the rescue, large piles of debris with full-sized pine trees, oak trees, and refrigerators floated past crashing into the surf. The major concern for the rescuers was the fear of being hit by a large tree or getting caught up underneath one. To make matters worse, the combination of rain, rushing water and crashing sea made communications between the rescuers and the victim impossible. Further, the only light available was provided by the Coast Guard who had to shoot up flares to light the area. Despite the treacherous conditions, and the possibility of being pulled into the debris pile, the actions of CDF Fire Captain Bill Fisher stand as testimony to the quality and courage of the everyday CDF Firefighter.

Edward Fitzgerald

Officer

S.F. Port Authority

10/28/1957

Special Service Award (Silver)

On October 28, 1957, Officer Edward Fitzgerald of the Harbor Police Force of the San Francisco Port Authority single-handedly captured a bank bandit who robbed a branch of the Crocker-Anglo National Bank of San Francisco and stole $1700. Officer Fitzgerald was driving a patrol car on official business when at the corner of First and Mission Street he was hailed by a passerby in a taxicab. The passerby requested Officer Fitzgerald apprehend a suspected bank robber who had commandeered another taxicab and was making his escape. Officer Fitzgerald approached, captured, and searched the suspected bank robber at gunpoint and then turned him over to the San Francisco police. In the bandit's possession was the stolen $1,700

John Fitzgerald

Caltrans Transportation Engineer

Department of Transportation

5/4/2006

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 4, 2006, Department of Transportation emp oyees John Fitzgerald and Anand Kapoor were working near an intersection in the city of Visa ia and witnessed a car run a red light and broadside an SUV. The SUV rolled several times and came to rest on its eft side The woman inside began screaming that she was trapped and smoke starting coming from the vehic e Mr Fitzgerald and Mr. Kapoor rushed to the vehicle and ripped the windshield out with their bare hands. They pulled the woman to safety and comforted her until the paramedics arrived Mr Fitzgera d and Mr. Kapoor suffered bruises and minor cuts to their hands and elbows. Without a thought for their own personal safety both were able to rescue a trapped woman from a smoking vehicle saving her from further injury or death

William T. Fitzgerald

Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

5/7/2022

Special Service Award (Silver)

On May 7, 2022, at approximately 11 00 a m , Sergeant Wi iam Fitzgerald arrived on the scene of a reported possible male jumper who was parked on the right shoulder of southbound Interstate 5 to the westbound State Route 91 transition road Sergeant Fitzgerald noticed a man sitting in the passenger seat of the vehicle talking on his ce phone and asked if he needed assistance The man advised his vehicle had broken down, but he was OK. Officers Kasey Simas and Christopher Williams then arrived on their departmental motorcycles. Sergeant Fitzgerald walked over to advise them of the situation Meanwhile, the man exited his vehicle and stood next to the three-foot concrete barrier wall along the right shoulder, still talking on his cellphone and looking over the side. Officer Simas and Officer Williams asked him to step away from the wa , as it wasn't safe. While the officers were speaking with the man, he suddenly climbed atop the concrete barrier and attempted to take his own life by jumping off the 100-foot transition road to the freeway below. Risking their safety, the two officers and sergeant were ab e to grab the man, whose body was hanging over the concrete barrier. The man began to shout, "Please let me go! Please let me go!" Sergeant Fitzgerald and Officers Simas and Wi iams su cessfu y rescued the man by pu ing him back over the concrete barrier and onto the right shoulder of the transition road, preventing his imminent death. Sergeant Fitzgerald transported the man to a safe location off the freeway where emergency medical personne assessed and transported him to the hospital. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Va or to Ca ifornia Highway Patro Sergeant Wi iam T Fitzgerald for his act of heroism extending above and beyond the normal call of duty

Charles Edward Fitzpatrick

Recreation Therapist

Department of Mental Hygiene

5/16/1970

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 16, 1970, Charles Edward Fitzpatrick, Recreation Therapist with the State Department of Menta Hygiene at the Dewitt State Hospital in Auburn, was at the confluence of the north and midd e forks of the American River in the Sacramento area when he found a young man in the water not breathing Mr Fitzpatrick applied mouth-to-mouth resuscitation for nearly an hour before a patrol car arrived Mr Fitzpatrick then got the victim back across the river on a rubber life raft, having to stop midway to administer more resuscitation.

Donald Foster

Senior Psychiatric Technician

Department of Mental Hygiene

1/31/1963

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 31, 1963, a station wagon containing a woman and seven children ranging in age from 7 12 was caught up in the swirling cross current of a flooded channel emptying into the Napa river in the city of Napa The vehicle stalled as the flood water arose around it. An 11 year old boy climbed out and fought his way to get help. A dump truck driver arrived at the scene and tried to lend assistance. Mr. Foster arrived at the scene, unhesitatingly jumped onto the running board of the truck and was carried within reach of the car. He climbed onto the hood of the automobile and extricated all of the remaining children while encouraging and instructing them in a calm manner. As he was assisting the woman to safety, the car lurched and dislodged Mr. Foster, throwing him into the flood waters. He managed to clutch and pull himself back on to the hood and with care and with great difficulty, rescued the woman. At that moment the car was washed away and disappeared into the raging torrents of the flooded river. After all were safe Mr Foster left the scene without giving out his name. He was located the next day through a radio broadcast. Some days later when the waters ebbed, the vehicle was found buried under four feet of mud and rocks.

John Franz

Correctional Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

5/24/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 24, 2017, at 10:20 a.m., in the Pelican Bay State Prison outdoor exercise yard, holding approximately three hundred inmates, a one-on-one fight started. Correctional officers responded to the fight to stop the incident. While responding staff were attempting to quell the incident, approximately 130 inmates began rushing and attacking the officers. Officer John Franz, working in the exercise yard, braced himself in order to defend himself, but was quickly overrun by a large crowd of inmates. Officer Franz was knocked to the ground, but immediately realized he needed to recover if he was to survive this attack. When he got back to his feet he saw a group of inmates beating Officer Paul Hicks who was on the ground. Officer Franz partnered with Officer Michael Humphrey and they fought their way toward Officer Hicks through attacking inmates in order to stop the attack on Officer Hicks. The attacking inmates were so large in numbers that Officer Franz and Officer Humphrey could not reach Officer Hicks to help him. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Franz's heroic act saved the lives of fellow officers and inmates in the face of a large prison fight. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctional Officer John Franz.

Matthew Frattaroli

Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/13/2019

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 13, 2019, at approximately 12:47 a m , California Highway Patrol Officers Matthew Frattaroli and Wesley Tom were dispatched to a commercial vehicle crash on Interstate 5, in the city of Anaheim The truck tractor and trailer were on fire and bystanders advised the officers that the driver of the truck tractor was trapped inside the burning wreckage. Officer Frattaroli saw the truck driver apparently unconscious within the burning wreckage. Officer Frattaroli used a fire extinguisher to combat the flames surrounding him Both Officer Frattaroli and Officer Tom climbed into the wreckage to try and pull the victim out of the burning vehicle. Officer Tom used a knife to cut the driver's seat belt and, with Officer Frattaroli's help, the officers were able to successfully pull the driver free from the burning wreckage. In total, it took the officers nearly two minutes to successfully free the driver from the burning wreckage while the fire grew around them. Officers Frattaroli and Tom dragged the driver away from the burning truck, to a safe distance, as the truck became totally engulfed in flames. Local fire and rescue provided medical care and transport to a nearby hospital. With no regard for his own safety, Officers Frattaroli went above and beyond the call of duty The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Matthew Frattaroli

Gregory Gadsby

Class title: Unknown

Employment Development Department

6/30/1986

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 30, 1986, in the San Francisco Office of the Employment Development Department, unemployment insurance division, employee Gregory Gadsby, along with three additional EDD personnel, struggled with an armed gunman, at a great threat to his safety and life, managed to help disarm the distraught man who was trying to shoot another EDD employee within their vicinity. Mr. Gadsby's courage to tackle a highly emotional, potentially explosive individual brandishing a gun put his life in jeopardy. Not only was he instrumental in saving the life of the intended shooting victim, but also prevented the threat of additional injuries or death to all the other employees in the office.

James Gaffney

Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/15/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer James Gaffney on October 15, 2003, performed an act of heroism at risk to his personal safety in an attempt to rescue a victim from a burning vehicle. At 5:20 a.m., Officer Gaffney was riding his departmental motorcycle to work on northbound I-405, when he noticed a collision in the southbound lanes of the freeway. One of the vehicles sustained extensive rear-end damage and was engulfed in flames. Officer Gaffney stopped his motorcycle, jumped the center divider and ran to the burning vehicle, where he found two on-duty paramedics attempting to extinguish the flames. The unconscious, injured driver was trapped inside the vehicle with flames rapidly approaching him from behind. Officer Gaffney attempted to open the driver's door; however, it was jammed by the collision. With the heat and intensity of the fire increasing and the fire department nowhere in sight, Officer Gaffney enlisted the paramedics to help him pull the driver out of the vehicle through the shattered driver's side window. Despite repeated attempts over several minutes, they were unable to extricate the driver from the crumpled dashboard and steering wheel. The flames now raged through the passenger compartment of the vehicle, igniting the driver's seat and forcing back the rescuers. Officer Gaffney gathered fire extinguishers from commercial truckers at the scene, and with the assistance of a bystander, sprayed the flames around the driver and rallied the paramedics to make another attempt to save the driver. With his entire upper torso in the vehicle, Officer Gaffney worked to pry the driver from the wreckage. At this time, the gas tank ignited, causing flames to surge forward and ignite the driver's back and arms. Despite the searing heat and smoke from the flames, Officer Gaffney and the paramedics did not give up. They placed their safety aside and kept pulling, until they finally dislodged the burning driver. Officer Gaffney smothered the flames on the driver and helped carry him to a place of safety. He then remained with and comforted the driver, until responding emergency personnel arrived at the scene. The vehicle was soon fully engulfed in flames. The driver sustained second and third degree burns to 30 percent of his body, as well as fractures to his clavicle and lumbar spine. Despite the heroic efforts led by Officer Gaffney, the driver subsequently passed away. Due to the heroism, care and commitment with which he treated the driver, Officer Gaffney was invited to attend his funeral service. The driver's family expressed their heartfelt appreciation to Officer Gaffney for all his efforts. They were grateful Officer Gaffney saved their family member from burning to death, as this allowed them and his friends to see him one last time before his interment.

Rene Galindo

Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/17/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officers Rene Galindo and Kevin Austin, on September 17, 2003, performed an act of heroism at risk to their personal safety by rescuing a distraught and suicidal victim from a freeway overcrossing. At 6:30 p.m. Officers Galindo and Austin of the Southern Division Commercial Unit were on patrol in the South Los Angeles Area. Both officers monitored and responded to a call of a distraught and suicidal woman who had climbed out onto the ledge of the State Route 91 freeway overcrossing. Officer Austin quickly directed the Sheriff's department to stop all north and southbound traffic. As Officer Galindo's arrival, he observed the lone female standing on a two inch ledge, clinging to the north edge of the freeway, directly over the traffic lanes of the Main Street under crossing. She was slowly moving further out over the traffic lanes and in danger of falling. Officer Galindo could see the woman was becoming fatigued; however, she remained inaccessible to emergency scene personnel due to an adjacent concrete barrier wall. The fire department was dispatched, yet it was doubtful that the woman's strength would hold out long enough to wait for their arrival. Officer Galindo formed a plan to use the height of his enforcement vehicle as a rescue platform and subsequently positioned it directly above her location. He then climbed onto the shell of the enforcement truck and leaned over the wall, taking hold of the woman and preventing her from falling. As Officer Austin observed Officer Rene Galindo attempting to rescue the woman, Officer Austin climbed up on top of the vehicle, leaned over the wall. While Officer Galindo was holding onto the wall with his left hand, he used his right hand to quickly grab the females' clothing down near the rear waist area. As Officer Galindo struggled with one arm to bring the female up to his position near the top of the wall, Officer Austin then grabbed the females pony tail with his right hand and her left arm with his left hand. At this point the female became violently combative as both officers struggled to pull her over the retaining wall. The officers were subsequently able to control and secure the female on the freeway side of the wall.

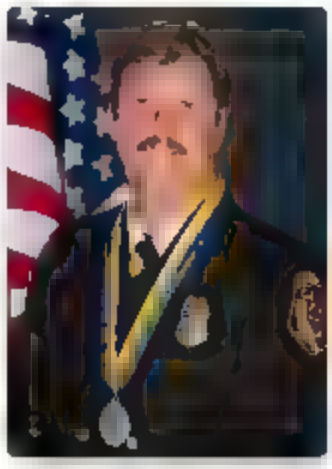
Steven Gallegos

Division Chief, Retired

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

12/14/2015

Special Act Award (Gold)



On December 14, 2015, at 2:50 p.m. retired Division Chief Steven Gallegos was at Puerto Rico's Playa Mar Chiquita relaxing with his family and celebrating his birthday. The beach surrounds a small semicircular cove with a small opening to the sea. The surf that day was significant, with strong currents and waves crashing through the opening in the rocks, precluding swimming or snorkeling, even in the sheltered bay. Mr. Gallegos, along with his son-in-law, observed a small of group of people taking photos atop a rocky peninsula near the mouth of the small cove. Within a few moments, two exceptionally large waves struck the rocks in succession, knocking three of the four individuals into the water. Both men immediately went into action. With three victims, two women and a man, struggling in dangerous sea conditions, Mr. Gallegos' son-in-law entered the water and was able to reach one of the women. Mr. Gallegos obtained a boogie board to throw to his son-in-law, but the wind caught the board and it landed away from the pair. Upon noticing the severe distress of the other woman, Mr. Gallegos realized he would be her only chance to survive. He jumped into the water and was immediately struck by a large swell that threw him against the rocks and pushed him underwater. Once he recovered, he swam to retrieve the board and met up with his son-in-law and the first woman. Mr. Gallegos remained with the first woman while his son-in-law retrieved the other, who was barely coherent. Mr. Gallegos kept both victims afloat with the board while his son-in-law retrieved a life ring, which was thrown to the endangered man. They all remained in the water for an extensive amount of time, until a Coast Guard helicopter and police department boat were able to reach the group. The two women were airlifted to the hospital. Mr. Gallegos, his son-in-law, and the male victim were safely brought on board the police boat. All three victims made full recoveries.

John C. Gallemore

Officer

California Highway Patrol

6/26/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 3 42 a m on June 26, 2020, Officer John Ga emore attempted to perform a traffic enforcement stop on a vehicle traveling 86 miles per hour, in a 65-mile per hour speed zone. The vehic e fai ed to yield to the officer's lights and siren and a high-speed pursuit reached speeds of 105 mi es per hour on a relatively traffic-less freeway The vehic e veered off of the roadway, crashing into a arge tree, then rolling over and erupting in flames Officer Gallemore and Officer Barnes responded to the occupants yelling for help, with Officer Gallemore breaking the driver's side window and the two officers removing two of the occupants from the flaming vehicle. The two occupants confirmed a third passenger was still in the vehicle. Officer Barnes instant y c imbed headfirst into the smoke-fi ed passenger compartment. Officer Barnes ocated an unconscious passenger in the front passenger seat with his legs pinned due to the crash He ut ized a pocketknife to cut the man's restraint and then pulled on the man's torso and arms The passenger's sweatshirt slipped off, causing Officer Barnes to ose his grip as he was overwhelmed by the smoke. Switching places, Officer Gallemore entered the vehic e headfirst and grabbed onto the passenger's arms He continued to pull until the passenger's legs were freed from the wreckage Officer Gallemore felt the passenger s ip, ca ing for Officer Barnes to he p Together, both officers ifted the passenger from the vehicle before the flames entered the passenger compartment. They brought the unconscious passenger abou 25 feet away from the vehicle, just as the vehicle was overtaken by flames. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Gallemore went above and beyond the ca of duty The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patro Officer John Gallemore

Edward Clyde Gamble

Highway Patrolman

California Highway Patrol

4/3/1971

Special Act Award (Gold)

Officer Gamble and a friend were off duty and visiting a salt flat near Estero Beach in Baja California where dune buggy and motorcycle races were being held, when they saw a dune buggy carrying two men overturn, and burst into flames, coming to rest upside down. The driver was killed instantly. Gamble and his friend saw the accident from 75 yards away and ran to the scene. The passenger was hanging upside down by his seat belt, trapped in the flames. As Officer Gamble and his friend strained to push the vehicle on its side, the friend was overcome with the heat and fire and fell into the flames. Holding his breath, Officer Gamble pulled his friend free of danger and returned to the hapless passenger. Officer Gamble used his pocket knife, burying his head in the passenger's mid- section to protect his face from flames, he cut a belt only to discover it was Graham's trouser belt, not the seat belt. Retreating to safety and fresh air, Officer Gamble yelled to Graham that it was useless. Yet Officer Gamble plunged back into the flames to free the victim. This time he cut the seat belt and pulled the passenger to safety. Officer Gamble suffered severe burns on his face, neck and arms

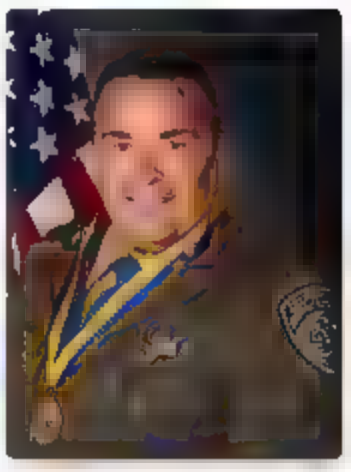
Adam Garcia

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/27/2013

Special Act Award (Gold)



On January 27, 2013, at approximately 8:27 p.m., California Highway Patrol Officer Adam Garcia responded to a call involving an overturned pick-up in Lake County. The truck driver attempted to pass another vehicle and lost control, sliding sideways, overturning, and landing in a creek bed with the front end wedged up against an embankment. The truck was also occupied by the driver's wife and another passenger. As Officer Garcia arrived on the scene, the passenger side engine compartment started to ignite and the passenger quickly climbed out the rear window. The driver and his wife, however, were trapped inside. Officer Garcia climbed down the steep embankment and as he approached the truck, the right side became engulfed in flames. Both the driver and the passenger doors were jammed shut. Officer Garcia attempted to pull the driver out through his window, but he couldn't because the driver's leg was in a cast and pinned under the dashboard. The windshield was broken and flames quickly began to enter where the driver's wife was seated. Officer Garcia grabbed the woman, pulled her over the top of her husband, and out of the burning vehicle. Officer Garcia returned for the driver and, with persistent tugging, was able to free his leg and pull him out through his window. The woman suffered severe burns to her upper body and the man sustained a fractured shoulder and wrist, but both survived.

Ganzalo Garcia

Caltrans Tree Maintenance Worker

Department of Transportation

2/23/2023

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the night of February 23, 2023, around 11 00 p m , heavy snow and gusting winds were blowing through sections of Highway 101 in northern Mendocino County near Confusion Hill. It was one of the largest snowfalls in recent history for the area Trees and powerlines were falling, and vehicles were disabled along the right-of-way due to the dangerous icy conditions and debris in the road During an extended shift, attempting to clear trees from the traveiway, Tree Maintenance Worker Gonzalo Garcia and Tree Maintenance Lead Worker Michael T Butner encountered a couple who were traveling in their RV The RV was unable to safely make it out of the area due to low-hanging branches, downed trees, power lines and disabled vehicles. During a conversation, the couple stated to Mr. Garcia and Mr. Butner that they were planning to sleep in their RV until the morning in hopes the highway would be passable After hearing this, both Mr. Garcia and Mr. Butner became concerned for the couple's safety as trees were actively uprooting and falling in close proximity to their RV Due to the inclement weather and snow load, they explained to the couple that their RV was under a tree that looked susceptible to failure and pleaded for them to take their tow-behind vehicle and leave the area to safety. The couple were extremely reluctant to leave their belongings but were eventually convinced that getting out of the area was the securest idea Outside in the harsh weather conditions, Mr. Garcia and Mr. Butner assisted the couple in unhooking their vehicle from the RV, loading up their important belongings, physically pushing the two-wheel drive vehicle to help it gain traction and escorting them out of the area into a safe location. About an hour and a half after Mr Garcia and Mr. Butner accompanied the couple out of the area, the large tree above their RV fell and crashed through the RV, destroying it completely The living room, kitchen, and bathroom were all flattened under the weight of the tree. Had the couple not been convinced to leave, there could have been severe injuries or even death. Mr. Garcia and Mr Butner could have gone about their normal duties, working to open the highway Instead, they went out of their way, risking their own safety, to ensure the couple was out of harm's way. From convincing them to leave to physically helping them unhitch their vehicle and escorting them to safety Mr. Garcia and Mr. Butner went beyond the call of duty The couple called the next day and left a voicemail on the phone of Mr. Butner thanking them both for their service and for caring enough to help them out of a dangerous situation. Mr. Garcia and Mr. Butner's situational awareness and concern for this couple's safety was outstanding Their professional knowledge and thoughtfulness of the possible outcomes resulted in lives saved or severe injury avoided. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation, Caltrans Tree Maintenance Worker Gonzalo Garcia for his heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Harold E. Garcia

Psychiatric Technician

Department of Mental Hygiene

3/27/1967

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 27, 1967, at 6:45 p.m., Psychiatric Technician Harold S. Garcia was walking out of the institute's entrance when he heard a patient shouting. Looking up through the closing darkness, he saw a frightened young woman clinging to the framework of a temporary construction elevator five stories high. The elevator shaft was about two feet wide and connected to the building by thin, metal braces. Mr. Garcia ran inside the building and went up to the sixth floor where he found a temporary opening to the elevator shaft. He walked across a one and one-half inch metal brace to span the four and one half feet between the shaft and the building and began climbing down to the woman below. She was crying and began threatening to jump. Mr. Garcia stopped several feet above the woman and talked to her until he gained her confidence. He then climbed down and helped her up through the narrow shaft and through the sixth floor opening.

Raymond Garcia

El Segundo Police Department, Lieutenant

Other

4/11/2008

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On April 11, 2008, Lieutenant Garcia and Officer O'Connor were working a special detail at a theatre complex when they were told by the manager of an uncooperative man in the lobby who was demanding a ticket refund. The officers approached and noticed the man appeared extremely sweaty. The subject pulled away at an attempted pat down and then retrieved a weapon when the officers reached for him. The subject opened fire, his first shot striking Lieutenant Garcia in the face. The round entered above Lieutenant Garcia's lip, shattering the right side of his upper jaw, knocking out several teeth. The bullet continued on, striking a vertebrae and finally lodging in Lieutenant Garcia's neck. Officer O'Connor tackled the subject, but he continued firing, striking Officer O'Connor in the chest and shoulder at point blank range. Fortunately Officer O'Connor's bullet proof vest absorbed the impact from the torso shot, but the shoulder shot caused extensive damage, severing several tendons and muscles. The subject then got up and ran from the building. As he did so, Officer O'Connor followed, engaging the subject in a running gun battle. Lieutenant Garcia, dazed and bleeding profusely fought off his injuries and followed, also firing his service weapon. Both officers fired until the subject was incapacitated.

Jeffrey A. Gartner

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/29/2000

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Jeffrey Gartner performed an act of heroism at great risk to his own safety, in an attempt to rescue a victim of a heart attack from a moving tractor-trailer combination. At approximately 8 49 a.m. on August 29 2000, Officer Jeffrey Gartner was southbound on US 101, approaching Willow Road in heavy commute traffic, when he encountered a commercial vehicle drifting out of the lane in an erratic manner. Officer Gartner recognized the driver was unconscious and the 30,000-pound vehicle was proceeding down the road out of control. The vehicle had already careened off the concrete sound wall twice and struck a call box sign. Officer Gartner, deciding it was too dangerous to allow the vehicle to continue, drove ahead and blocked the path to the Willow Road off-ramp. He ran back to the vehicle and leaped onto the moving tractor. With only seconds to act, Officer Gartner brought the commercial vehicle to a stop within 10 feet of his patrol vehicle. Officer Gartner, with the assistance of a good Samaritan, extricated the driver from the cab of the tractor. During Officer Gartner s assessment of the driver, he realized he was in cardiac arrest. Officer Gartner immediately administered cardio-pulmonary resuscitation on the side of the road during commute traffic until the Menlo Park Fire Department arrived to take over patient care. The driver was then transported to Stanford Hospital for medical treatment and observation. Despite Officer Gartner's valiant efforts, the driver passed away several days later.

Kyle Robert Gaspard

Caltrans Highway Maintenance Worker

Department of Transportation

8/9/2007

Special Service Award (Silver)

At approximately 12:00 p.m., on August 9, 2007, the Pine Grove Maintenance crew was working on westbound Highway 88 at Buckhorn Ridge Road near Ione when a Mule Creek State Prison inmate bus, towing a trailer, passed their location. As the bus drove down the hill, a wheel came off the trailer, causing sparks to ignite the grass next to the roadway. A grassfire quickly ensued burning through the meadow and into the trees. Seeing the blaze, Lead Worker Dave McDaniel sent Michael Blake in his grader to the west flank of the fire where he proceeded to cut a fire line from the highway up into the trees. Meanwhile Leonard Marsh, Kyle Gaspard and John Kearns, using a narrow private drive, drove their large water tanker in from the east. With Kyle Gaspard manning the water hose, they kept the east flank of the fire from reaching two homes located within the path of the fire. Even after the arrival of the Cal Fire units, these employees continued to support the fire trucks with water until the fire was contained. Dave McDaniel and Scot McKinney set up traffic control and managed to keep the road open to traffic, while directing emergency vehicles to the fire. Cal Fire dispatched 6 engines, 2 hand crews, 1 dozer and 2 helicopters to handle this fire. The immediate actions taken by the maintenance crew prevented the fire from reaching catastrophic levels and saved at least two homes from possible destruction. Cal Fire commended the crew for their quick response.

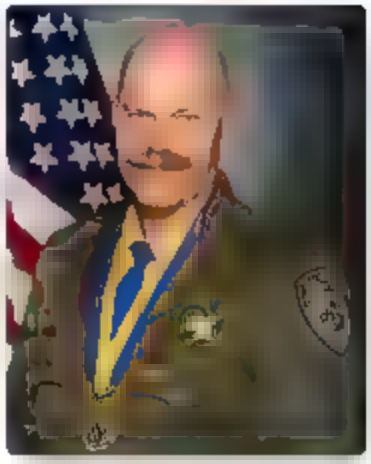
Pete Gavitte

Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/8/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)



On October 8, 2017, at 9:52 p.m., California Highway Patrol Officers Pete Gavitte and Whitney Lowe responded to a rapidly growing fire in the Atlas Peak area of Napa County. Approximately 20 minutes later, their helicopter arrived on scene and observed the smoke-filled air, fallen trees and powerlines across multiple roadways. Trapped residents had little time before the approaching fire would overcome them. Officer Gavitte and Officer Lowe recognized the only escape for these residents would be by helicopter rescue. Despite the firestorm's wind gusts in excess of 70 miles per hour and extreme downdrafts and updrafts, they made the decision to fly into the heavy smoke and land near the vehicles attempting to exit the area. As they landed, a trapped resident ran to the helicopter and pleaded to the officers to take his son and family members to safety. Although the helicopter only fit four adults at a time, Officers Gavitte and Lowe continuously flew trapped residents to safety. The officers faced grueling and physically demanding conditions for more than six continuous hours as they conducted dangerous flights behind the fire line while smoke, ash, and embers blew around them in complete darkness. Officer Gavitte stated that "the intense windy conditions felt like a hurricane", but he was able to maintain control of the helicopter. Also, to maximize rescue operations, Officers Gavitte and Lowe utilized hot refueling, which entails fueling the helicopter while the engine is running. This type of refueling elevates the danger, as it requires special training and equipment, and can be disastrous if done incorrectly. Aerial surveillance after the night of the rescues showed the area where the rescue operations were conducted had been completely overrun by the fire. The Atlas Fire burned more than 50,000 acres and destroyed over 400 structures. With no regard to his own safety, Officer Gavitte went above and beyond the call of duty, saving 26 lives and two dogs. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Pete Gavitte

Steven R. Gazzano

State Park Ranger

Department of Parks and Recreation

6/26/1974

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 26, 1974 at Thornton State Beach in San Mateo County, State Park Ranger Steven R Gazzano saved a 17 year old boy from the water when the boy could not get back to shore. The victim had floated beyond the breakers on a plastic float, but then the float ruptured and he was unable to return to shore against the current. A park visitor reported the situation to Ranger Gazzano. Ranger Gazzano changed into his swim trunks, grabbed a float, ran a quarter-mile to the beach and entered the water Ranger Gazzano was unable to make progress, so he left the water and reentered at a point nearer the victim and successfully assisted him to shore.

Travis Gee

State Park Peace Officer Supervisor

Department of Parks and Recreation

11/9/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of November 9, 2018, State Park Peace Officer Supervisor Sergeant Travis Gee woke up at his residence in Paradise and saw the glow of the Camp Fire through his window. He got up and immediately responded to assist his community. He worked with State Park Peace Officer Sabrina Bruis and together they helped evacuate hundreds of people who remained in burned-over areas in the Town of Paradise. While helping rescue and evacuate people, Sergeant Gee and Officer Bruis came across flames and downed trees that blocked roadways, forcing them to find alternative routes to prevent the evacuees from being trapped by the swift-moving fire. At one point, they worked with a CalFire captain to cut down power lines and clear debris along Clark Road to rescue evacuees who were surrounded by fire. They were aware of the large number of lives that had already been lost and yet, bravely and tirelessly, put themselves in harm's way to save others. Sergeant Gee worked to save members of the community even though he knew that his own home and the homes of his family members had already burned down. In addition, he did not know if his family had been able to safely evacuate. It wasn't until later that he was able to confirm that all of his family members made it safely out of the area. With no regard for his own safety, Sergeant Gee went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Parks and Recreation State Park Peace Officer Supervisor Sergeant Travis Gee.

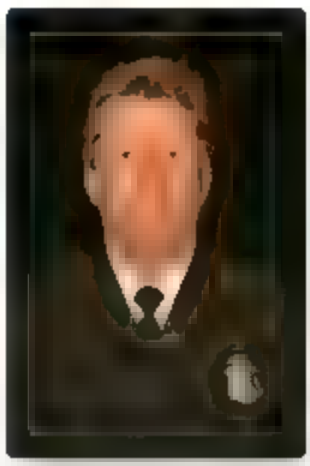
Rick Lee Gibble

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

5/22/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)



On May 22, 2008, the crew on Engine 1675 was assigned to Division "O" on the Summit fire, which was burning in Santa Clara and Santa Cruz Counties. At approximately 9 45 am, the crew was requested to go to a residence on Dove Lane to search for a previously evacuated resident who was last seen running back up his driveway toward his residence. Despite great personal risk, the crew drove to the residence. The fire was "crowning" and burning intensely in the heavy vegetation on both sides of the access road, and the winds were blowing at 40 to 50 miles per hour. When the crew arrived at the residence driveway, the flames were so intense that they could not drive any further, so they backed up to a safe area and positioned the engine for a quick evacuation. Captain Gibble instructed Firefighter Efflandt to stay with the engine to act as a lookout for increased fire behavior and other hazards while he and Firefighters Hollowell and Blythe headed up the driveway on foot to search for the missing resident. Exposed to intense heat and smoke from the burning residence and with nearby propane tanks venting and blowing up in ground-shaking explosions, the crew retreated from the residence only after a thorough search of the area and repeated attempts to garner a response from the resident failed It was later determined that the resident had fled to safety. The crew from Engine 1675 is to be commended for their dedication to duty and service despite the great danger to their personal safety The State of California takes great pride in presenting Fire Captain Rick Lee Gibble, and Firefighters Steven W Blythe, Kyle Efflandt, and Ryan Hollowell, these Gold Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service

Richard Gibson

Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

11/10/1997

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 3 40 pm, during a rainstorm, CHP Officer Richard L Gibson and his partner saw a Lexus sedan spin around and stop, facing oncoming traffic, near the center divider wall on the Golden State Freeway, south of the Foothill freeway interchange Officer Gibson and his partner parked their patrol car in the median ahead of the Lexus. As Officer Gibson walked toward the driver, he spotted a Ford hydroplaning across the wet traffic lanes The Ford hit a Mazda and both cars started careening toward the median. The victim was standing between the Lexus and the patrol car. Officer Gibson ran to the victim, grabbed him from behind in a bear hug, and threw him over the four foot tall concrete center divider As soon as the victim was thrown over the divider, the Mazda hit the Lexus head on, the Lexus hit Officer Gibson and he was thrown onto the hood of the car. When he got up, the first thing he did was check on the victim who was very thankful. He realized that he could been seriously hurt or killed if he had gotten trapped between the two cars.

Roger Allyn Giese

Pipeline Safety Engineer

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/21/2023

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 21, 2023, Pipeline Safety Engineer Al Giese witnessed a vehicle accident directly ahead of him near Buttonwillow on Interstate 5 as he headed toward Crimson Pipeline Beer Nose Facility. He pulled over to lend assistance and ensure notifications were made to emergency responders. Mr. Giese checked the damaged SUV for the condition of the occupants. A male driver and a female passenger were inside the vehicle and clustered in the front passenger seat. The driver was mobile and calling for help and the passenger was immobile but breathing. Mr. Giese advised the driver to leave the passenger in a sitting position to help their breathing until emergency responders arrived. While waiting for emergency responders, smoke began to appear within the cab of the damaged SUV. Mr. Giese found that a small fire had started near the front brake area of the vehicle. After unsuccessfully stopping the fire, a decision was made to remove the passenger from the vehicle which was soon engulfed in flames. Unfortunately, the driver had not revealed that the car contained explosive fireworks. As a result, the passenger again needed to be moved to another location away from the ongoing blasts and dangerous fire that had spread to the interstate shoulder and shut down traffic in both directions. Emergency responders then arrived and aided the passenger and mitigated the fire. Due to internal injuries, unfortunately, the passenger did not survive. Mr. Giese's duties are typically related to inspections of pipelines and pipeline facilities. His responsibilities do not involve responding to emergencies nor acting as a first responder, but he saw that people's lives were at risk and acted heroically without hesitation and at great risk to himself to ensure their welfare. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Pipeline Safety Engineer Al Giese for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Terry Gillich

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

7/7/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 7, 2001 at approximately 2:00 p.m., the Victorville area was experiencing severe thunderstorms and flash floods. Terry Gillich, a Caltrans Equipment Operator II Gary Ratliff, a Caltrans Landscape Leadworker and a private citizen, Mr Jim Payne, observed a pickup truck caught in floodwater. It had overturned onto its driver's side. As they went to get a closer look, the truck door opened and Ryan Bird, age 14, started screaming and waving for help. Two Highway Patrol Officers arrived on the scene Mr Gillich entered the water in his plow truck to attempt a rescue, but the current was too strong and the plow truck began sliding sideways. The pickup truck was being pushed downstream by the current with the young man screaming for help. All five rescuers jumped into the water. Mr. Payne helped Mr. Milliken, age 75, who had climbed through the passenger door and fell into the water, the current slamming him against the undercarriage of the truck as it did to Ryan Bird who had also climbed out Mr Payne dragged Mr. Milliken to Mr. Ratliff and they pulled him to safety with an officer caring for him Holding on to the Caltrans vehicle, the men formed a human chain and helped Ryan Bird and Nathan Milliken, age 14, to safety Mrs Milliken age 70, and Natalie Shoemaker, 16, were still trapped in the vehicle The water kept rising and the truck began to overturn. Mrs. Milliken was having a difficult time exiting the vehicle and when she finally climbed out and jumped into the water she was pinned to the undercarriage by the strong current. Breaking the chain, Mr. Gillich grabbed the grill to help stabilize the vehicle while Mr Payne, also breaking the chain, fought the current, reached Mrs. Milliken, and kept her from being swept downstream, aided by Apple Valley Fire Department personnel who had just arrived at the scene. Once Mrs. Milliken was out, Natalie Shoemaker quickly exited the truck and jumped to safety All victims escaped serious injury After confirming everyone was safe, Mr Ratliff and Mr Gillich continued their storm patrol.

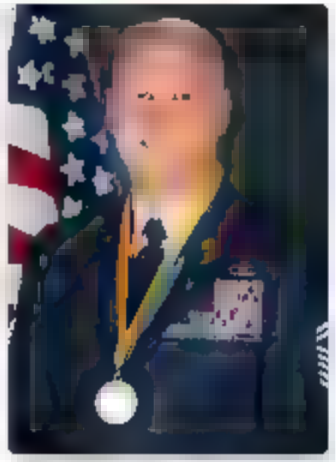
Jeffrey A. Ginther

Senior Master Sergeant, 144th Fighter Wing, California National Guard

California Military Department

7/29/2015

Special Service Award (Silver)



On July 29, 2015 at 11 30 a m , Senior Master Sergeant Jeff Ginther witnessed a vehicular accident that resulted in the vehicle being submerged in an irrigation canal with the driver inside. A crowd of bystanders gathered, and one entered the canal to attempt to rescue the driver. Upon opening the car door, both the driver and the individual attempting to aid him were pulled under the water. Senior Master Sergeant Ginther a water survival instructor, entered the swift-moving water to assist. He rescued both the driver and the would be rescuer, bringing them to the safety of the canal bank. Due to Senior Master Sergeant Ginther's swift actions, the driver did not sustain any serious injuries. His actions demonstrate unwavering courage and reflect great credit upon himself the California Military Department and the State of California.

Trevor Gipson

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

12/26/2021

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the night of December 26, 2021, Caltrans Equipment Operator II Scott Davidson was on storm patrol driving south on Highway 3 in Trinity County through heavy snowfall. Despite limited visibility he noticed tire tracks going over an embankment. Mr. Davidson exited his vehicle to further investigate and located a truck with a young male driver pinned inside. He immediately notified dispatch and proceeded to break the passenger window to gain access to the young man who was freezing and going in and out of consciousness. Mr. Davidson covered him with his own clothes and talked to the young man to keep him alert as he was not sure of the extent of his injuries. A short time later, Caltrans Equipment Operator IIs Trevor Gipson and Jeremy Maraviov arrived on scene to help. The three took turns aiding the young man and providing what clothing they had to keep him warm, while also clearing snow and removing portions of the vehicle to clear a path for emergency personnel. After a period of time, CAL FIRE personnel arrived, and Mr. Davidson suggested they attach a chain from his four-yard vehicle to the crashed vehicle to secure it so that CAL FIRE could safely extract the driver. They then deployed flares while Mr. Gipson and Mr. Maraviov shoveled steps out to help the first responders. They also helped the fire crew with any tools and supplies needed, and once the injured driver was extracted, they assisted the first responders with getting him up the embankment and safely into the ambulance. Mr. Gipson proceeded to plow the snow off the road so the ambulance could make it out safely. Due to extremely cold temperatures, remote location and injuries sustained, the young man likely would not have survived had it not been for the attentiveness and selfless actions performed by Mr. Gipson, Mr. Davidson, and Mr. Maraviov. Adding to their selflessness, none of the three reported their heroic acts to their supervisors. A letter to Caltrans management was received from the local CAL FIRE captain, commending them on their valiant efforts. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation CalTrans Equipment Operator II Trevor Gipson for his act of heroism extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Benjamin A Glapenske

Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/3/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 11:50 p.m., on March 3, 2008, California Highway Patrol Officers Benjamin A. Glapenske and Kelly A. Valdez were traveling northbound on Highway 99, south of State Route 46 near Bakersfield, when they saw flames from a car fire on the railroad tracks east of the freeway. Officer Valdez called the Bakersfield Communications Center and requested fire department assistance. Arriving at the scene, they saw two men moving inside the burning vehicle. The car's engine was completely engulfed with fire giving off intense heat. Officer Glapenske grabbed a fire extinguisher and attempted to put out the fire, but the extinguisher malfunctioned. Officers Glapenske and Valdez went to the rear passenger door and together pulled it open. Seeing movement from the driver, they reached in, grabbed the man's arm, and dragged him out through the back rear door and to a safe area away from the car. Officers Glapenske and Valdez saw the flames were engulfing the car's headliner, and quickly moved towards the second occupant. The heavy fire and smoke made it difficult to breathe, but they could see the man's face, arms and chest were on fire so they reached back into the intense heat, grabbed the man's arms and dragged him out of the front seat, through the back door and to a safe area. Immediately after, small explosions erupted from the car, and they were forced to move both victims further away before Officer Valdez could assess their medical condition. When the fire department arrived, the victims were treated and transported to Kern Medical Center in Bakersfield where it was determined the passenger's burns were major, so he was flown to the Fresno Burn Center for further treatment. The driver, who suffered serious injuries, was unlicensed, tested positive for alcohol and was taken into custody upon his release from the hospital. Officers Glapenske and Valdez were treated at the scene for burns and smoke inhalation. Their heroic actions successfully rescued two men from severe or life-threatening burns.

Guillermo L. Godinez

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/29/1986

Special Service Award (Silver)

On July 29, 1986, California Highway Patrol Officers Guillermo Godinez and Adam Christin rescued a man trapped inside a pickup truck that had caught fire after crashing into a barrier on the San Diego Freeway The truck exploded shortly after they dragged him from the cab Officer Godinez endangered his personal safety and risked his life in order to save the life of a helpless victim The quick and selfless actions of Officer Godinez were above and beyond the call and scope of duty

Arthur Golden

Fish and Game Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

1/12/2012

Special Service Award (Silver)

On October 12, 2012, at approximately 5:42 p.m. Fish and Game Warden Arthur Golden was driving home from training when he came upon the scene of an accident near Corcoran. The small pickup truck involved in the accident was off the side of the roadway on a steep embankment. A bystander told him the man in the truck was not breathing and Warden Golden rushed to the truck to check. The driver was lying against the passenger side door, seemingly unconscious, bleeding from his face. Warden Golden radioed for help then went back to the truck. It was hovering precariously on the embankment and the driver's body weight was going with the slope. The driver's door was smashed in and the passenger's door could not be opened, so Warden Golden leaned through the broken driver's side window and supported him. The vehicle slid a few inches. Warden Golden asked the man if he could move his neck and when he replied by moving it, Warden Golden pulled the man towards him to relieve the pressure on the door and hopefully prevent it from rolling over. As Warden Golden was doing this, aid arrived and the man was extracted from the vehicle.

Felipe Gomez

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

4/30/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Felipe Gomez, on April 30, 2001, performed an act of heroism at risk to his personal safety by entering a school bus to rescue the trapped bus driver, which was impacted by a utility pickup truck in a traffic accident and fully engulfed in flames. At approximately 7:15 a.m., on April 30, 2001, while on his way to report to his duty station in Mendota, Fire Captain Gomez witnessed a vehicle accident involving a Central Unified School District bus and a utility pickup. Upon impact, the utility pickup burst into flames. Fire Captain Gomez knew that a North Central Fire Station with paramedics was located 300 feet west of the accident, and quickly preceded to the station to notify firefighters of the situation. Fire Captain Gomez then returned directly to the scene of the accident. The utility pickup was fully engulfed in flames, which were impinging on the driver's side of the bus. Several adults were helping the five school children out of the bus. Fire Captain Gomez noticed the bus driver, Lynette Zavala, was still in the driver's seat in the bus. When Fire Captain Gomez approached the passenger door, he noticed Ms. Zavala was still moving. He was unable to open the passenger door, but was able to crawl through the door under the broken handle and enter the bus. Smoke and heat filled the upper portion of the bus. Fire Captain Gomez was unable to pull Ms. Zavala from the seat and instead, had to stand up to lift her out of the seat and placed her on the floor. After he exited the bus through a different exit, and returned to pull Ms. Zavala through the opening of the passenger door. Two bystanders assisted Fire Captain Gomez and moved Ms. Zavala to a safe area where he stayed with her to keep her calm and maintain her airway until paramedics took over.

Ms. Zavala had burns on her upper torso, arms and face. Soon after paramedics took over Fire Captain Gomez became physically ill, was placed on oxygen and transported to the hospital and treated for smoke inhalation. Ms. Zavala suffered burns over 65% of her body, multiple broken bones and other injures and unfortunately passed away a few days after the accident.

James Goodman

Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/17/1989

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 17, 1989, at 5:00 pm, Officer James Goodman was performing motorcycle patrol duties in the area of the Interstate 880 Cypress Free structure when the Loma Prieta earthquake occurred. Officer Goodman immediately responded to the disaster scene. After providing aid and assistance to numerous injured people on the ground, Officer Goodman climbed onto the unstable freeway structure searching for survivors. Frequent aftershocks were occurring and the structure continued to settle. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Goodman crawled into an area of the collapsed structure and located a seriously injured victim trapped in a truck crushed to a height of about two feet. In his efforts to maneuver through the small space to reach the victim, Officer Goodman was forced to removed his helmet and gun belt to function in the cramped space. In an attempt to free the driver, he removed the stuffing from the driver's seat and cut the seat springs. Officer Goodman was later joined by other rescuers including fellow Officer Arnold Stamps. Despite the extreme hazardous and life threatening conditions for the officer and rescuers, they continued their efforts for several hours in confined quarters strewn with glass, rubble and spilled gasoline. Approximately three hours later, firefighters arrived with the Jaws of Life. Despite exhaustion, Officer Goodman continued to provide assistance to the rescue workers until the trapped driver was freed from the wreckage and removed from the structure

Michael R. Gotfried

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/31/1974

Special Act Award (Gold)

In the late afternoon of August 31, 1974, Officer Michael R. Gotfried was traveling westbound on the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge when he observed an automobile parked in a turnout a short distance west of the Yerba Buena Island Tunnel. As he slowed to investigate, he saw a man walking toward the guard rail. Quickly parking his car, he ran calling after the man as the man climbed the railing and disappeared from sight.

The officer returned to his car and radioed to report the incident. Officer Gotfried found the would-be suicide working his way along a narrow painter's scaffold six feet below. The scaffold widened to 30 inches at its far end and was rimmed only along its outer edge and at the broad end by a single one-inch pipe railing approximately four feet high. The platform was mounted to and operated along a six inch wide I-beam running track at floor level. This slim beam provided the only obstacle to fall through the two and one-half feet of space between the scaffold and bridge. The island's rocky shore was 200 feet below. Officer Gotfried climbed the railing and dropped to the I-beam where he inched his way to reach the platform. By now the man had stepped around the railing's end and appeared ready to let go. The officer cautiously moved forward and when he got close to the man he grabbed his arm. All attempts to pull him fully behind the railing were unsuccessful; however, the officer managed to hold his position even though the large, extremely strong man made repeated attempts to get back around the railing so he could jump. Eight minutes later Sergeant Myatt arrived at the scene. For more than half an hour the officers talked to the man, often struggling with him when he would suddenly pull on the railing and try to force his way around it to the open side. In desperation, Sergeant Myatt straddled the gap between the I-beam and their perilous perch to provide more room for the two officers to restrain the man. Finally, they were able to bring him to his knees and in this extremely dangerous position below the railing, forced his arms behind his back and handcuffed him. Using stretcher straps to form a harness and with the aid of Treasure Island hospital corpsmen holding on tightly from above, the officers slowly guided the now crying man across the void and raised him upward to a horizontal position as they passed him through the narrow opening between the bridge cable and railing to safety.

Jared Gotro

Firefighter

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

8/18/2021

Special Service Award (Silver)

Around noon on August 18, 2021, the Cache Fire ignited on the east side of Clearlake, in the Dam Road area. The area faced a difficult fire season that year, and weather for the day showed Red Flag conditions with high temperatures, low humidity, and winds between 10-20 miles per hour. By 1:00 p.m., while Department of Forestry and Fire Protection fire fighters were working to evacuate one of two trailer parks, the fire made a rapid push south into the trailer park, trapping fire fighters and residents. The access road had become blocked. Firefighters worked with a tractor operator to break through a fence to allow trapped individuals a way to escape. Once the fire crew established a way out, a woman was spotted engulfed in flames, coming from the area of the trailer park where other individuals had just fled. CalFIRE Fire Apparatus Engineer Martin Newman, with Firefighters Cory Sousa and Jared Gotro, ran back into the fire. With the help of Firefighters Sousa and Gotro, Mr. Newman hoisted the victim onto his shoulder and ran 100 feet to safety. The victim would eventually receive treatment at the UC Davis Burn Center. With no regard for his own safety, Mr Gotro went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Firefighter Jared Gotro.

Cole Gould

Chief Warrant Officer Two

California Army National Guard

6/26/2008

Special Service Award (Silver)

At approximately 8 30 pm on June 26, 2008, Army National Guard personnel were preparing to conduct a short, Night Vision Goggle helicopter training mission in the Sacramento vicinity, when the call came in requesting support in a 10,000 foot rescue mission in the John Muir Wilderness. Earlier that day, a Boy Scout troop was crossing a stream in the remote Wilson Lake area of eastern Fresno County, when a 10 ton boulder rolled and trapped a fourteen-year-old boy's leg between it and another boulder Most of the crew assembled by Officer Weatherhead for the planned short training mission had already been on duty almost 12 hours. This mission would be challenging because the altitude for the rescue was at 10,000 feet which provided a reduced power capability, smoke from a nearby fire restricted visibility, the crew was starting the mission at a time they would normally be going home, and the darkness required use of Night Vision Goggles. In spite of all of this, the crew agreed to the mission and immediately began planning. The helicopter crew departed Mather at 10:10 pm and arrived at the Fresno airport at 11 20 pm where they picked up a CAL FIRE rescue employee and equipment. At 12 35 am, the crew departed Fresno under Night Vision Goggles. They located the victim, conducted a recon of the landing zone and landed at approximately 1:15 am While Officer Weatherhead stayed with the aircraft, the remainder of the crew, carrying the rescue equipment and using only head lamps and compasses, set out under total darkness through treacherously steep rocky terrain to find the Boy Scout After nearly three hours of rescue efforts, they were able to move the 10 ton boulder enough to free the boy's leg They administered medical aid and carried the boy for more than an hour back to the helicopter After being awake for 24 hours, the crew arrived at the Fresno airport at approximately 6 10 am and the Boy Scout was then transported to the hospital. The crew's actions, without regard for their personal safety, saved this young boy's life The State of California takes great pride in presenting Chief Warrant Officer Three Randall Weatherhead, Chief Warrant Officer Two Cole Gould, Sergeant First Class Kelly Hughes, and Staff Sergeant Rob Walters, these Silver Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Fred Graves

CHP Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/27/1986

Special Service Award (Silver)

On February 27, 1986, a fellow CHP officer had stopped to question a female hitchhiker on the freeway. The woman started to approach him, then suddenly darted into the roadway and stopped in the middle lane of traffic. Incredibly, the woman escaped being struck in the heavy early evening traffic, however, a near miss with a large truck sent her running into the center divider. The officer on the scene radioed for help, afraid that any action on his part might send the woman running back into the roadway. Officer Graves responded to the call for assistance. Moments after his arrival, the woman walked from the center divider toward the officer on the shoulder, directly into the path of an oncoming vehicle which struck her. Without hesitation, Officer Graves bolted from his patrol car, dashed across two lanes of heavy traffic, grabbed the injured woman seconds before both of them would have been hit by another vehicle, and pulled her to safety.

Duane Greaver

Officer

California Highway Patrol

6/8/2005

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 8, 2005, California Highway Patrol Officers Duane Greaver, Timothy Hall, and Peter Sutherland rescued a suspect from his burning vehicle. At approximately 2 57 p.m., Officer Ha was patro ing southbound on Interstate-5, near Pioneer Boulevard in Orange County, when he attempted to stop a driver for fai ing to pass on the right safely The driver refused to stop and led the officer in a pursuit During the pursuit, the suspect drove in a reckless manner and caused an injury collision. The suspect attempted to flee the scene of the collision, but due to damage to his vehicle, was unable to do so. The vehicle eventually stalled on the right shou der of southbound I-5, and the suspect wedged the right side of the vehic e against the concrete abutment of the over crossing and remained inside the vehic e Officers Sutherland and Greaver arrived to assist Officer Hall The officers repeatedly gave verba commands for the suspect to exit the vehicle, but he refused Suddenly, the engine compartment of the suspect's vehicle burst into flames and the Orange County Fire Department was called. The flames quickly grew to four feet high and entered the interior of the car. Fearing for the safety of the suspect, the officers initiated a rescue Officers Hall, Sutherland, and Greaver approached the vehicle on the driver's side and again ordered the suspect out of the vehic e The suspect locked the doors and refused to comply. Officer Suther and broke out the driver's side window with his baton, and the officers tried to physica y remove the suspect. He retreated to the right front passenger seat and wrapped his arms in the seat belt harness. As the interior of the vehicle caught fire, Officer Greaver entered the vehic e through the passenger side window and pushed the suspect toward the open driver's side door The suspect continued to resist but was finally removed by Officers Ha and Suther and and carried away from the burning vehicle, where he was taken into custody. Their actions saved the man from severe injury or death.

Joe Green

Peace Officer Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/29/2022

Special Service Award (Silver)

On June 29, 2022, at approximately 5:54 p.m. the Perris Emergency Command Center dispatched a response to a three-vehicle traffic collision with a person trapped inside one of the cars. The first arriving unit was Riverside County Sheriff's Deputy Carlos Rosado, who broadcasted that the vehicle was on fire and confirmed the driver was trapped. Deputy Rosado requested additional nearby units that were carrying fire extinguishers to respond. CAL FIRE Peace Officer Fire Captains Joe Green, Ariel Sosa, Tim Cabral, Kory McGranahan and John May heard the radio call and responded that they were on duty and assigned to their patrol nearby. Upon arrival, the officers observed that the driver was trapped, screaming, burning and bleeding. The driver needed to be pulled from the vehicle, but no one could pry open the door given the extreme conditions. Officer Green rushed to provide support by moving fire extinguishers and assisting Officers McGranahan and May. Due to the twisted metal and hidden fire between the engine and the dashboard, the fire extinguishers did not suppress the fire. Officer McGranahan climbed into the vehicle and placed himself in the fire's path to curtail the flame's growth by inserting the fire extinguisher's dry powder into gaps and cracks near the driver's lower legs. Officer May used his handheld forceable entry tools to peel open the hood and fenders to access the seat of the fire. As more fire extinguishers arrived from nearby units, both Officers McGranahan and May used them to keep the fire from growing. Officer Cabral aided Officers McGranahan and May in attempts to combat the fire. Officer Cabral pulled his ice chest full of water to temporarily suppress the fire's growth beneath the vehicle. These forward-thinking actions slowed the fire's spread, but the driver was still in harm's way. The first fire engine arrived at approximately 6:02 p.m. Still facing the active burning fire without any fire-suppressing agent left, Officers Sosa and Cabral pulled the hose from the fire engine while the firefighters suited up in additional safety gear. Thankfully, Officers Sosa and Cabral extinguished the fire. Additional fire engines arrived and cut the driver out of the vehicle. The driver was flown by air ambulance to the nearest local trauma and burn center. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Peace Officer Fire Captain Joe Green for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Robert F. Green

Unit Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

10/22/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 22, 2003, CDF Chief Robert F. Green performed an act of heroism at risk to his own personal safety when, while aboard a flight from Las Vegas to Ontario, he restrained an unruly male passenger who had made threats that he had a bomb in his back pack and was going to detonate it. During the flight, Chief Green observed a flight attendant trying to get a passenger to calm down and remain in his seat until the plane was at flight level. The agitated passenger kept standing up, disregarding the flight attendants instructions. The situation quickly went from bad to worse when the passenger suddenly jumped out of his seat, struggled with the flight attendant and tried to open the compartment over his head. Chief Green sprang into action, came up behind the disorderly passenger and, through a series of quick, surefooted moves, succeeded in getting the man off balance and, with the help of two other passengers, managed to restrain and fully control the unruly male passenger. The flight returned to the Las Vegas Airport where the Metro Police boarded the plane and took the passenger into custody. It was during this time that one of the flight attendants informed Chief Green that the passenger, during the verbal discussion, had threated that he had a bomb in his backpack in the overhead storage area and was going to use it.

Edward Greene, Jr

Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/18/1996

Special Act Award (Gold)

Officer Greene and his partner received a call about a possible suicide. At 2:44 am, the Officers arrived on scene and saw a young woman standing outside the fence at the I-605 195 St. overcrossing. Officer Greene approached the crying woman and initiated a conversation with her. Officer Greene talked to the woman for a considerable amount of time and then the young woman changed her mind about jumping. She started to move off the bridge, but became frightened She froze, tightly gripping the fence for safety Officer Greene, in full uniform, put down his PR-24 and climbed over fence placing the young female between himself and the fence, preventing her from falling or changing her mind about jumping On the opposite side of the fence a bystander and Officer Green's partner used a strap and a rope to secure Officer Greene and the woman to the fence. During this time, Officer Greene felt the weight of the woman increase as she loosened her grip on the fence Officer Greene had to hold on extra right to support himself as well as the woman Officer Green held on for 26 minutes until the Fire department's hook and ladder unit arrived and got into position, then both safely climbed down from the bridge

Thomas Greenstone

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/19/1990

Special Act Award (Gold)

State Traffic Officers Thomas R Greenstone, Annette Hirschi and Craig E Muehleisen, on January 19, 1990, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to their personal safety and life in rescuing a woman and a ten-year-old child from a burning wooden residence. At approximately 0100 hours Officers Greenstone and Hirschi were entering Interstate 5 northbound in the city of Leucadia when they observed thick smoke near a gasoline station located west of the freeway Upon arrival at the location they observed thick smoke coming from the two-story house next to the gasoline station. Observing flames inside the rear portion of the house, the officers began yelling to alert any occupants. Within seconds, a female exited down the outside stairway As officers escorted her to safety she was unable to confirm whether others were in the house. Officer Greenstone proceeded to work his way through thick smoke outside the residence to a partially opened door. Hearing coughing and crying sounds coming from the room, he entered the room on his hands and knees. With only an 18" air space he moved through the dense smoke to an area near the far corner where he thought he saw a bed Unable to locate anyone and overcome by smoke he was forced to retreat. Unwilling to give up, both Officers Hirschi and Greenstone made two more attempts to locate any occupants, before being forced to retreat. Refreshed, Officer Hirschi entered the room again, and within seconds the beam of her flashlight illuminated a white object moving on the floor approximately five feet away As she approached the object she saw it was a child Grabbing her around the waist, she dragged her toward the exit. As she reached the door, Officer Greenstone took the child and handed her to Officer Muehleisen, who had just arrived on the scene. Upon being advised that there were probably more people inside, Officer Muehleisen approached the open door. Despite the ever present danger with windows popping and the ceiling ablaze and a tremendous amount of heat being generated by the flames, he placed a scarf around his face, knelt down and crawled into the room. Forced back twice by the smoke and flames, the officers moved away from the burning structure

Thomas Greenstone

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/24/1990

Special Act Award (Gold)

State Traffic Officers Thomas R Greenstone and Wesley John Maehler, on December 24, 1990, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great personal risk to their own safety and life in the rescue of two adult males from a burning pickup truck. At approximately 03:30 a.m., Officers Greenstone and Maehler were on routine patrol when they observed flames south of their location, near Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base Immediately responding to the location the officers encountered a burning pickup truck with two unconscious adult males in the cab of the truck Officer Maehler got the fire extinguisher from the patrol car while Officer Greenstone ran to the right door of the pickup. The engine compartment was fully engulfed in flames, and had ignited the surrounding vegetation which quickly became six-to-ten foot wall of flames, along the left side of the truck. Officer Greenstone opened the right door and located the passenger in the thick dense smoke that filled the interior of the truck. The passenger was extremely intoxicated and resisted Officer Greenstone's attempt to get him out of the truck Overcoming the passenger's resistance, Officer Greenstone pulled him to safety as the dash and windshield started to melt from the extreme heat and flames which had made their way through the firewall. Officer Maehler then entered the truck, and located the unconscious driver slumped up against the driver's door and the dashboard He began pulling the driver toward the passenger's door, but due to his large size, the driver became stuck between the seat and the steering wheel. After considerable effort Officer Maehler was able to free the driver and pull him through the open door. Both Officers Greenstone and Maehler carried the still unconscious driver to a safe distance away from the truck which was now fully engulfed in flames

Mary Elizabeth Gregory

Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

5/29/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 29, 2004, at 11 00 a m , California Department of Fish and Game Warden Mary Elizabeth Gregory was talking to a fisherman on the west side of Pacific Coast Highway near Batiquitos Lagoon in San Diego County when she heard someone crying for help. A 13 year old boy was being swept out to sea by a strong current. This particular area is known for its strong rip tides, and the boy's life was in immediate danger Warden Gregory grabbed the man's fishing pole and ran along the rocky bank toward the boy, who was now approximately 40 yards from the open ocean. Placing her life in jeopardy, Warden Gregory jumped into the water fully clothed in her uniform, body armor, gun belt, boots, phone and radio and began swimming toward the boy with fishing pole in hand While the body armor vest was buoyant, her equipment became saturated and began to weigh her down in the water. Warden Gregory saw the boy go under the water once, and feared he would go under again if she wasn't able to reach him in time Fortunately, she got close enough for the boy to grab the fishing pole and pull himself to her. Heavily weighted and with the boy hanging on her shoulder, Warden Gregory had the strength and resolve to swim against the current and pulled the boy to the rocky shore. The boy, who turned 14 the following day, was unharmed but badly shaken As a result of Warden Gregory's quick action, the life of this boy was saved.

Bryan Gregson

Los Angeles Police Department, Officer

Other

2/17/2005

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On February 17, 2005, Officers Troy Zeeman and Bryan Gregson of the Los Angeles Police Department observed a known gang member who had a record of violent crime against the citizens of Los Angeles and was suspected of a drive-by shooting that killed an innocent woman. The officers attempted to take the gang member into custody which subsequently led to a foot pursuit and a gun battle. At one point, the suspect aimed his gun at Officer Zeeman and said, "You're dead." Fortunately, the bullet missed and the officers were able to return fire, wounding the suspect, which led to his capture.

Charles E. Grennell

State Park Ranger

Department of Parks and Recreation

3/25/1978

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 25, 1978, State Park Ranger Charles E. Grennell, accompanied by three other rangers, responded to an emergency call of "swimmers in distress" at Sunset State Beach. Upon reaching the beach, Ranger Grennell checked with the first swimmer who had reached the shore safely and learned another swimmer was in trouble. Removing only his gun belt and boots, Ranger Grennell entered the heavy surf and swam out to the second victim bringing him close enough to shore for a fellow ranger to carry him to the beach and administer oxygen. By this time, an army helicopter had arrived on the scene and requested assistance in retrieving a third victim who was approximately two hundred yards from shore, lying face down in the water. Ranger Grennell again volunteered to assist, despite the dangers of strong rip currents. Lowered into the choppy water in a helicopter rescue basket, Ranger Grennell, exhausted and cold, placed the victim partially into the basket. The victim fell out the basket and Ranger Grennell again attempted to rescue the victim.

Jonathan Griffith

Officer

Department of Justice

4/12/2012

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On April 12, 2012, responding to reports of shots fired and officers down, Officer Jonathan Griffith, along with ten other officers of the Modesto police department, arrived on scene to find Stanislaus County Sheriff's Deputy Bob Paris and civilian locksmith Glendon Engert lying unconscious outside the front door leading to the suspect's apartment front door. Armed with an arsenal, the suspect had barricaded himself inside his apartment and was exchanging fire with a second deputy, Deputy Mike Glinskas, who was pinned down and had issued the call for help. Placing ballistic shields across the front passenger window of a Modesto police car, a group of officers took cover on the driver's side and used the vehicle as mobile cover to advance on the apartment while the remaining officers deployed a flash bang diversionary device. Their coordinated efforts were successful and they were able to extract Glinskas and escort him to safety and medical attention. They were also able to recover Paris and Engert, both of whom had unfortunately been mortally wounded.

After an eleven hour standoff, the suspect took his own life. The actions of Officer Griffith and his fellow officers prevented the deadly standoff from escalating further and threatening more lives.

Arthur R. Grijalva

Caltrans Highway Maintenance Lead Worker

Department of Transportation

6/24/2010

Special Service Award (Silver)

On June 24, 2010, at approximately 2:00 p.m., Caltrans employees Arthur Grijalva, Tommy Neri, Pedro Vasquez, Pablo Diaz, and Leonardo Necochea were traveling on Interstate 8 in the Jacumba area of San Diego County when they came upon an accident. A van had overturned in the median and landed upright on its wheels starting a small brush fire. Mr. Neri and Mr. Necochea rushed to the vehicle and found an unconscious woman in the driver's seat. Mr. Diaz and Mr. Vasquez quickly began attempts to extinguish the fire. In an effort to prevent additional traffic collisions, Mr. Grijalva began directing traffic. While Mr. Neri and Mr. Necochea were administering first aid, they noticed the fire was getting out of control and approaching the vehicle. With the help of Mr. Diaz and Mr. Vasquez, they rigged a backboard from a portion of the wrecked vehicle, cut the woman's seatbelt, placed her on the backboard, and safely removed her from the vehicle to a secure location. Within minutes after removing the woman, the vehicle went up in flames. Mr. Neri and Mr. Necochea stayed with the woman and provided additional first aid while the others began assisting Mr. Grijalva with traffic control until help arrived. The actions of the Caltrans employees, without regard for their own safety, saved the woman's life. The State of California takes great pride in presenting Arthur Grijalva this Silver Medal of Valor, and Tommy Neri, Pablo Diaz, Leonardo Necochea, and Pedro Vasquez these Gold Medals of Valor, for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the call of duty.

Wesley D. Grim

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

5/31/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 31, 2007, Fire Captain Wesley D. Grim responded to a fire at a single family home in the community of Exeter. He found the home was fully engulfed with heavy smoke, and flames were coming out of the windows and vents of the structure. Captain Grim was told by Exeter Police Department personnel that an infant was trapped in the back bedroom of the home. While several attempts had been made to rescue the infant, the intense heat and smoke made them turn back. Captain Grim decided he would make one last attempt to rescue the trapped infant. He geared up with his Personal Protective Equipment and entered through the bedroom window. He searched through the smoke filled room and found the infant on a bed in the far corner of the room. Captain Grim re-traced his way back to the window and handed the infant to an Exeter Police Officer who immediately took the infant to a paramedic at the scene. Unfortunately, even with the valiant effort of Captain Grim and the Exeter Police Department, the infant did not survive.

Brett A. Gronemeyer

Local Assistance Engineer

Department of Transportation

8/7/2008

Special Service Award (Silver)

At approximately 3:15 p.m., on August 7, 2008, California Department of Transportation employees Brett Gronemeyer and Brandon Larsen were returning to their office in Eureka after a field review in Fort Bragg. On Route 1, in a very remote area of Mendocino County, they came across an SUV with its hazard lights on and blocking part of the roadway. They pulled over to lend assistance and noticed two ropes tied to the vehicle's axle dangling over the edge of the road into the canyon. When they looked over the edge, they saw two people standing next to an injured woman sitting approximately one hundred feet down the canyon side, and a motorcycle at the bottom of the canyon. Mr. Gronemeyer and Mr. Larsen immediately returned to their vehicle to get safety vests and helmets. Mr. Larsen worked his way down the steep hillside to the injured female motorcyclist and the two motorists who had stopped to help. The motorcyclist had injuries to her left leg and foot, including a severe laceration on her heel and possible broken bones. Mr. Larsen suggested they stabilize her and wait for an ambulance, but she wanted to get off the side of the hill. He tied one of the ropes to her and helped her up the steep hillside, while one of the motorists helped guide her injured leg to prevent further injury. When they arrived back at the road, Mr. Larsen stabilized the woman by stopping the bleeding and bandaging her heel. Meanwhile, Mr. Gronemeyer, who had remained at the roadway, had directed a motorist to call for an ambulance and the CHP once phone service was obtained and had moved their vehicle to a more visible location to warn oncoming drivers of the hazard. He directed traffic around the parked vehicles, which posed a significant hazard due to the narrow roadway and blind corner. With the motorcyclist stabilized, Mr. Larsen turned his attention to helping Mr. Gronemeyer with traffic control until the ambulance arrived. The quick, decisive actions of these two Caltrans employees were responsible for the rescue and stabilization of this accident victim and prevented further collisions and injuries from oncoming traffic.

Stephen Guarino

Deputy State Fire Marshal, Supervisor

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

10/27/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 27, 2008, at approximately 1:30 p.m., Deputy State Fire Marshal Supervisor Stephen Charles Guarino was in Sacramento County traveling on Interstate 5 when he witnessed a pick-up truck and van driving erratically. Both vehicles were chasing and slamming into each other through traffic and weaving erratically into and out of all lanes on the freeway. When the truck attempted to force the van off the road, the truck lost control, ran off the freeway, collided with a tree, and caught fire. Deputy Guarino stopped his vehicle and ran to the left side of the truck. He saw that the male driver was going in and out of consciousness. Another witness came to assist in getting the driver out of the burning truck and brought his fire extinguisher. The truck doors were jammed shut, so Deputy Guarino used the fire extinguisher to break the driver's side window. Both he and the other witness pulled the man out to safety, and Deputy Guarino started administrating first aid to the man until the ambulance arrived. Deputy Guarino's heroic and speedy actions saved the man's life.

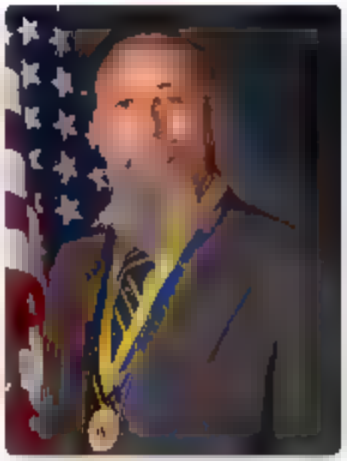
David Guerena

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

7/14/2012

Special Act Award (Gold)



On July 14, 2012, at approximately 1:30 p.m., Caltrans Equipment Operator II David Guerena was listening to his police scanner when he heard a call go out regarding a structure fire behind his home in Atascadero. He immediately ran out of his house and saw smoke and flames coming from an adjacent apartment complex. Mr. Guerena ran to the complex to help and, while en route, heard two very loud explosions coming from the burning building. Once on scene, a young man told him his mother was still inside one of apartments. The fire department had not yet arrived. Mr. Guerena ran to the door and tried to make contact with the young man's mother. Arming himself with a small fire extinguisher he found hanging on the wall, Mr. Guerena could make out the figure of a woman a few feet ahead of him in the room, however when he called out to her, she appeared disorientated. The front room was filled with smoke and flames were shooting over his head. He used the fire extinguisher to clear a path between her and the doorway and continued to call out to her. When she came within reach, he grabbed her. As Mr. Guerena and the woman passed through the door, a third and noticeably stronger explosion sent fire and debris directly over their heads. Mr. Guerena escorted the woman to a safe place, and her son and neighbors cared for her.

Henry Guerrero

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/3/2002

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Henry Guerrero, on July 3, 2002, performed an act of heroism at risk to his personal safety by rescuing an elderly victim clinging to the top of her overturned vehicle in the strong current of an irrigation canal. At approximately 10 47 p m , near the unincorporated community of Thermal,

9-1-1 callers reported a vehicle had been driven into the All-American Canal. Officer Guerrero, along with other CHP officers and allied agency personnel responded to the scene. The driver Ms. Elizabeth Cellucci, an 83-year old woman, managed to get out of her vehicle and was clinging to the top side of the automobile with only her head above the water. The vehicle, being swept by the strong current, eventually came to a stop directly underneath the Airport Boulevard Bridge Officer Guerrero noticed fire department personnel who had set up a life line on the downstream side of the bridge. Unfortunately, Ms Cellucci was physically incapable of reaching the line from her location Moreover, it was clear she could not swim in the strong canal current. As minutes passed waiting for the Water Rescue Team, it became apparent to the officers that Ms. Cellucci was not going to be able to continue holding on to her vehicle and would soon be swept away in the current. An overhead rescue by aircraft was impossible due to the vehicle's location directly under the bridge, thus, Officer Guerrero made the decision to rescue

Ms Cellucci himself He tied himself to a rope and CHP officers lowered him over the downstream side of the bridge. The CHP patrol car's push bumper support was the main anchor for the rope. Once at water level, Officer Guerrero was able to swing back and forth on the roper underneath the bridge toward Ms. Cellucci. On the fourth swing Officer Guerrero was able to grasp Ms Cellucci and pull her from the vehicle He then used the fire department lifeline to navigate back to the canal bank As they reached the canal bank, allied agency personnel pulled both Officer Guerrero and Ms Cellucci up the embankment Ms Cellucci was transported to a local hospital by paramedics suffering from hypothermia. She was treated and later released.

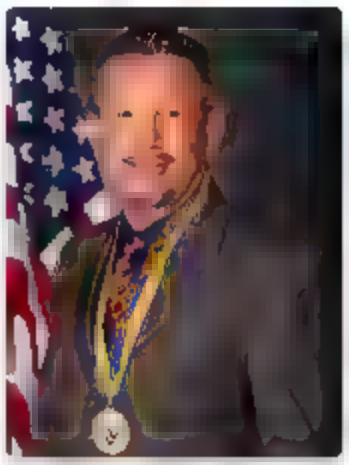
Victor Guerrero

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

5/1/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)



On May 1, 2001, at approximately 11 40 a m , Ca trans Equipment Operator II Victor Guerrero and Maintenance Leadworker Daniel Santacruz were c eaning a freeway drain on the right shoulder of the South Bound 405 freeway near Huntington Beach. Fo lowing estab ished safety procedures, they closed the shoulder and used a shadow vehicle for protection when suddenly a vehicle hit the back of their shadow vehicle and burst into flames. Mr. Guerrero and Mr Santacruz immediately approached the burning car and saw a semi-conscious driver with severe injuries. The driver was making no attempt to escape the burning vehicle. With traffic flowing just a few feet away and the vehicle quickly becoming engulfed in flames, Mr. Guerrero and Mr. Santacruz forced the door open, moved inside the smoke-filled cabin, removed the seat belt from the driver, and pulled the person to safety Soon afterwards, fire trucks, CHP, and other first responders arrived and began treating the critically injured driver.

Gary Guffey

Officer

Department of Justice

4/12/2012

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On April 12, 2012, responding to reports of shots fired and officers down, Officer Gary Guffey, along with ten other officers from the Modesto police department, arrived on scene to find Stanislaus County Sheriff's Deputy Bob Paris and civilian locksmith Glendon Engert lying unconscious outside the front door leading to the suspect's apartment front door. Armed with an arsenal, the suspect had barricaded himself inside his apartment and was exchanging fire with a second deputy, Deputy Mike Glinskas, who was pinned down and had issued the call for help. Placing ballistic shields across the front passenger window of a Modesto police car, a group of officers took cover on the driver's side and used the vehicle as mobile cover to advance on the apartment while the remaining officers deployed a flash bang diversionary device. Their coordinated efforts were successful and they were able to extract Glinskas and escort him to safety and medical attention. They were also able to recover Paris and Engert, both of whom had unfortunately been mortally wounded.

After an eleven hour standoff, the suspect took his own life. The actions of Officer Guffey and his fellow officers prevented the deadly standoff from escalating further and threatening more lives.

John Guhl

Deputy State Fire Marshal

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

5/18/2008

Special Service Award (Silver)

On May 18, 2008, while at the Grand Marina in the community of Alameda, Deputy State Fire Marshal John Guhl heard a loud screeching noise approaching from a distance. He turned to see a car on top of the embankment driving towards a fifteen foot rock-faced cliff embankment. The elderly driver suddenly stopped, leaving the passenger side wheel suspended above the embankment. The driver then put the vehicle in reverse and appeared to hit something from behind. Fire Marshal Guhl ran to the top of the embankment and watched as the car drove forward hitting a tree and the raised sidewalk next to the cliff embankment. Fire Marshal Guhl instructed a bystander to call 9-1-1 and alert emergency responders. The driver continued to slam his car into pier posts, large concrete barricades, and at one point Fire Marshal Guhl had to move behind a tree to avoid being hit. When the car became stuck in a flower bed, Fire Marshal Guhl approached the vehicle, identified himself, and asked the man to turn off the car. When the driver tried to back up again, Fire Marshal Guhl opened the unlocked passenger door, jumped inside, lunged for the car's ignition key, and turned the engine off. The driver struggled, but Fire Marshal Guhl was able to push the driver back, put the transmission in park, remove the key from the ignition, and exit the car. The driver was upset but remained safely in the vehicle until law enforcement arrived to arrest the driver. Fire Marshal Guhl's courageous efforts prevented further damage to the marina's property and saved the driver and other bystanders from injury or possible death.

John D. Guthrie

Forestry Foreman

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

8/8/1959

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 8, 1959, at approximately 7:00 p.m., Division of Forestry Foreman John Guthrie, as the leader and driver of a three person fire engine crew, responded to a fire caused by a traffic collision an hour earlier along the Ortega Highway (SR-74) about two miles west of Lake Elsinore. The crew headed north towards the billowing smoke. As they approached the fire, Foreman Guthrie got out and started down a steep bank to assess the situation and get a better look at the fire burning below. The fire was quickly increasing in intensity and the shifting winds pushed a wall of flames up the canyon towards their truck. Foreman Guthrie scrambled back and told his crew to move the fire engine up the highway out of the path of the fire and he would join them. He also advised the firefighters to stay in the engine cab for protection. He knew there was no room for him in the truck. Suddenly the fire burst upon them. With flames advancing, Foreman Guthrie ran to the fire engine and tried to use a hose line to wet himself down, but the hoses were burned. He dove under the truck for protection, but was overwhelmed by the inferno that roared across the highway. Receiving 3rd and 4th degree burns over 85% of his body, Foreman Guthrie was initially transported to a local hospital and subsequently moved to Redlands Hospital. He passed away five weeks later from his wounds. The Decker Wildland Fire was finally controlled five days later after burning nearly 1,400 acres and killing six firefighters and one civilian.

Salvador Gutierrez, Jr.

Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/11/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 11, 2009, California Highway Patrol Officer Salvador Gutierrez and his partner, Officer P. Holt, responded to a call of a vehicle overturned on southbound Interstate 5, north of the Santa Margarita River bed near San Diego. At the collision scene, Officers Gutierrez and Holt found a Lincoln Navigator and a Dodge Ram pickup with major collision damage. While Officer Holt assisted the occupants of the pickup, Officer Gutierrez ran to help the driver of the Lincoln who was trying to escape from his vehicle through the driver's side window but couldn't because his legs were trapped. As Officer Gutierrez reached the Lincoln, the driver's compartment area suddenly erupted into flames, engulfing the man's lower extremities. Officer Gutierrez reached in through the driver's side window, grabbed the driver, and began to pull in an attempt to free him from the vehicle and the rapidly expanding flames. With the driver's legs on fire, Officer Gutierrez was able to free the driver, drag him to safety away from the now fully engulfed vehicle, and extinguish the flames on his legs. The driver was transported by air to a nearby hospital and treated for third degree burns to his lower extremities, a broken jaw, and inhalation burns. The actions of Officer Gutierrez, without regard for his own safety, saved the life of the man. The State of California takes great pride in presenting to Officer Salvador Gutierrez, Jr., this Gold Medal of Valor, for his extraordinary act of heroism extending above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Charles Hafley

Foreman, Highway Maintenance Technician

Department of Transportation

3/4/1971

Special Act Award (Gold)

On a very frigid, March 4, 1971 day, the actions of Highway Maintenance Foreman, Charles H. Hafley he ped save the life of a woman by assisting in a harrowing rescue from the Smith River near Crescent City, Del Norte County. A 72-year-old Fremont, CA woman was driving east approximately 20 miles from the junction with Highway 101 north of Crescent City Her passenger was a 24-year-old Ballico, CA woman. As the women's car traveled over a narrow, twisting portion of tortuous Highway 199, the pavement was slick from the half-rain, half-snow that was fa ing Rounding one sharp corner known, prophetically as "Dead Man's Turn" the car went out of control. According to Highway Patrol reports, the vehicle skidded into the westbound lane, onto the shoulder, then recrossed the highway and p ummeted over the bank and into the icy, fast moving Smith River. There, sideways in the narrow swift river, was the car with the younger woman clinging to the top of the passenger side door and yelling for help, the current pulling her downstream Several minutes earlier, Mr. Hafley's co-worker, Highway Maintenance Technician Bernard O. Arney had been driving his pickup truck west enroute to an assignment down Highway 199 when he noticed skid marks and a reflector post knocked down, stopped, and went to the edge of the road It was 8 00 a m., and a half hour of intense action began.

Running down about 30 feet of rip-rap on the bank, Mr. Arney heard her warning that she was s ipping and couldn't hang on much longer. He then sprinted back up the bank and stopped the first passing car, telling the driver to go to Gasquet, seven mi es away, and call for the Highway Patro , ambu ance and wrecker, and to send his foreman Chuck Hafley to the scene. Mr. Arney then stopped two truckers asking for a rope which the second one had. Mr. Arney raced down the bank again He tied the rope around his chest, he dove into the river upstream from the car and et the current sweep him down to the vehicle. He clambered onto the truck, over the roof, and dropped down next to the 24-year-old woman, who by this time was about to go under. Mr. Arney then grabbed her, putting the rope under her arms, got back on top of the car, and hauled up on the rope, while trying to keep her mouth above water. Mr. Arney was ready to have the men on shore tug her to safety, but then found the rope was snagged and they couldn't pull her safe y to the shore. Just then Chuck Hafley arrived on the scene, donned a wet suit, fixed a second rope to himself and swam out to help Mr. Arney Mr Hafley he d the woman up while Mr. Arney freed the first rope. Other men on shore pulled and she came out. Unfortunately, the woman's older driving companion did not survive the p unge into the river. This event was also the first instance that Medal of Valor winners were actually photographed during rescue actions. Mr. Hafley performed an extraordinary act of heroism, at great risk to his own safety and life, in saving the life of another person.

Joe Haggard

Fire Crew Foreman

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/3/1966

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 3, 1966 while battling to control a brush and timber fire near Nevada City Crew Foreman Haggard noticed a sudden change in the fire pattern and attempted to radio a warning to Jerry A. Miller of Grass Valley, a bulldozer operator. Miller was unaware of the shift in the fire front. Crew Foreman Haggard could not contact Miller. Fully aware of the danger, Haggard hurried along the fire line to warn his fellow worker of the advancing flames The two men, Crew Foreman Haggard and Dozer Operation Miller were trapped by the blaze. They took cover under a fire-resistant blanket. The oxygen under the blanket was soon used up, and the two men were forced to seek refuge in a nearby irrigation ditch. Both men suffered severe burns Fire Crew Foreman Haggard risked his life to aid a fellow firefighter Though both were badly burned the quick thinking, courage and unselfishness of Fire Crew Foreman Joe G. Haggard saved the other man from a most certain death.

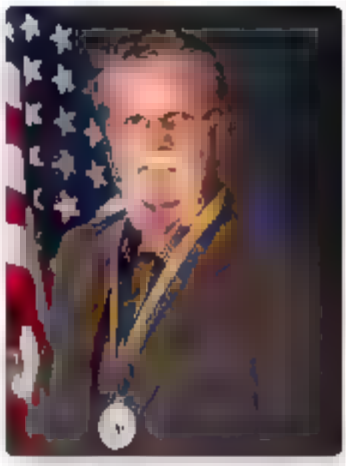
Gary Hahn

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

12/3/2006

Special Service Award (Silver)



On December 3, 2006, at approximately 1:00 p.m., Caltrans Equipment Operator II Gary Hahn was on rock patrol on State Route 96 in rural Siskiyou County when he noticed faint skid marks on the pavement. Mr. Hahn walked up and down the Klamath River Road scanning the location and saw a partially submerged vehicle in the river. Working through Caltrans dispatch, Mr. Hahn notified the CHP. The vehicle had gone over a nearly vertical embankment covered in blackberry brambles and poison oak. Broken glass littered the ground. Despite the potential of sliding down this dangerous slope into the icy-cold Klamath River, Mr. Hahn descended the steep grade, tripping and falling, and came upon a critically wounded young woman. Mr. Hahn stayed with her until rescue personnel arrived. Due to the rough terrain, the injured woman had to be transported out by helicopter.

Charles Hakopian

Firefighter

Other

12/6/2010

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

Just before 1 30 a.m., the Long Beach Fire Department responded to a two-story fire in North Long Beach Upon arrival, the fire crew observed an upstairs apartment heavily engulfed in fire and smoke On lookers reported that a 2-year-old boy was still inside Firefighters Hakopian and Sorenson ran inside the burning building to the second floor and began an aggressive attack on the fire. Firefighter Hakopian was searching the premises when he unexpectedly fell through the floor. He caught himself with his arms and pulled himself out of the hole, avoiding a fall to the first floor. He continued his search while Firefighter Sorenson sought to seat the fire. Hakopian found the limp body of the small child in a closet The boy had succumbed to the effects of smoke inhalation and was in respiratory arrest. Firefighter Hakopian grabbed the child and made his way past the collapsed floor to waiting paramedics. The boy sustained second degree burns on his legs and was listed in critical condition He has since recovered

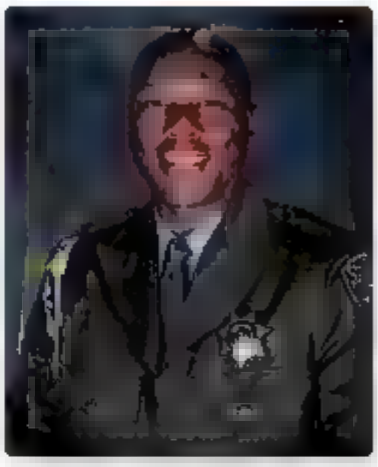
Dionte Hall

Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/19/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)



On February 19, 2020 at approximately 6:28 p m , California Highway Patrol Officer Dionte Hall conducted an enforcement stop on a sports car for multiple traffic violations The sports car pulled to the right shoulder and stopped. As Officer Hall exited the patrol vehicle, and approached the sports car, the driver fled. Officer Hall quickly returned to his patrol vehicle, advised the Los Angeles Communications Center, and immediately initiated a pursuit. Officer Hall briefly lost sight of the car and observed traffic ahead rapidly slowing and noticed a crash had recently occurred Upon arrival, Officer Hall observed the sports car and two other vehicles had been involved in a crash Due to the sports car's unsafe speed and unsafe passing on the right shoulder to elude Officer Hall, it crashed into the right side of the first vehicle, continued straight and crashed into the rear of the second vehicle. This impact caused the driver of the second vehicle to lose control and crash into the center divider wall. Officer Hall quickly detained the driver and passenger of the sports car. Officer Hall suddenly observed one of the vehicles catch fire with the driver still inside and unresponsive The flames were rapidly spreading throughout the vehicle, but Officer Hall could not open the locked driver side door Officer Hall used his baton to break the driver side window, reached inside to cut the seatbelt, and pulled the driver out of the burning vehicle. Passing motorists helped move the unresponsive driver to safety The vehicle was fully engulfed by flames in less than 45 seconds. Los Angeles County Fire Department personnel arrived on scene and extinguished the vehicle fire. The driver was transported to a nearby hospital with multiple injuries Officer Hall suffered a minor injury to his right hand as a result of breaking the window to gain access to the burning vehicle. Officer Hall placed himself in extreme danger and risked his life to save the injured driver from certain death With no regard for his own safety, Officer Hall went above and beyond the call of duty The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Dionte Hall

Timothy Hall

Officer

California Highway Patrol

6/8/2005

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 8, 2005, California Highway Patrol Officers Timothy Hall, Duane Greaver, and Peter Sutherland rescued a suspect from his burning vehicle. At approximately 2:57 p.m., Officer Hall was patrolling southbound on Interstate-5, near Pioneer Boulevard in Orange County, when he attempted to stop a driver for failing to pass on the right safely. The driver refused to stop and led the officer in a pursuit. During the pursuit, the suspect drove in a reckless manner and caused an injury collision. The suspect attempted to flee the scene of the collision, but due to damage to his vehicle, was unable to do so. The vehicle eventually stalled on the right shoulder of southbound I-5, and the suspect wedged the right side of the vehicle against the concrete abutment of the over crossing and remained inside the vehicle. Officers Sutherland and Greaver arrived to assist Officer Hall. The officers repeatedly gave verbal commands for the suspect to exit the vehicle, but he refused. Suddenly, the engine compartment of the suspect's vehicle burst into flames and the Orange County Fire Department was called. The flames quickly grew to four feet high and entered the interior of the car. Fearing for the safety of the suspect, the officers initiated a rescue. Officers Hall, Sutherland, and Greaver approached the vehicle on the driver's side and again ordered the suspect out of the vehicle. The suspect locked the doors and refused to comply. Officer Sutherland broke out the driver's side window with his baton, and the officers tried to physically remove the suspect. He retreated to the right front passenger seat and wrapped his arms in the seat belt harness. As the interior of the vehicle caught fire, Officer Greaver entered the vehicle through the passenger side window and pushed the suspect toward the open driver's side door. The suspect continued to resist but was finally removed by Officers Hall and Sutherland and carried away from the burning vehicle, where he was taken into custody. Their actions saved the man from severe injury or death.

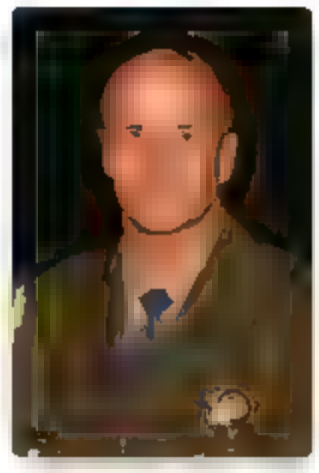
Sean Haller

Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/25/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)



On the morning of February 25, 2010, Fresno County Sheriff Deputies were attempting to serve a search warrant to a man in a residential area in the town of Mink er As the dep ties attempted to breach the main door of the residence, they came under intense gunfire from within the home, fatally wounding one of their dep ties They immediately broadcast "shots fired" over the radio California Officer Ha er, responding from the nearby town of Sanger, arrived on scene to find other aw enforcement officers engaging the s spect Officer Haller parked his patro vehic e, took p position behind his vehicle, and also began to engage the suspect. A short time ater, Ca ifornia Highway Patrol Officer Rivera arrived and took p a position of cover next to Officer Haller Both were engaged with the s spect for an unknown amo nt of time ntil someone gave a "cease-fire" command. After approximately 30 min tes with no shooting, the suspect suddenly began firing from an unseen location within the residence. For fear of their safety and the safety of other officers at the scene, Officers Rivera and Ha er ret rned fire towards the residence. D ring this exchange, someone yelled "officer down " Officer Rivera moved toward the ocation of the downed officer, fo nd him next to a marked patrol vehicle, and attempted to extract the downed officer from the ine of fire He was initially helped by an nknown person, however recognizing the need for assistance and the dire sit ation of the wounded Officer, Officer Haller stepped out from cover, directly into the ine of fire and continued to engage the suspect while he moved toward Officer Rivera and the downed officer Witho t regard for their personnel safety, Officers Ha er and Rivera, s ccessfully extracted the downed officer The State of Ca ifornia takes great pride in presenting Officers Sean Ha er and Rafael Rivera, these Go d Medals of Valor, for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Sean Haller

Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/25/2010

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

Officer Sean Haller and Officer Rafael Rivera of the California Highway Patrol responded to a distress call of "officer needs assistance," involving an active shooter and wounded sheriff's deputy. They arrived on the scene and immediately became involved in a gunfight, along with other allied agency and CHP officers. Officer Rivera heard someone yell "officer down" and located wounded Reedly Police Officer Javier Bejar. Officer Rivera started to extract Bejar, risking his personal safety by putting himself directly into the line of fire. Officer Haller realized that Officer Rivera needed help and increased his rifle fire toward the suspect. By increasing his "suppression fire," and placing himself in great danger, Officer Haller was able to provide the needed help for Officer Rivera to continue his extraction of Officer Bejar. Although Officer Bejar was successfully removed from the area and transported from the scene, he subsequently died from his injuries.

Kenneth Hamilton

Fire Apparatus Engineer

Department of Conservation

6/19/1970

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 19, 1970 Fire Apparatus Engineer Kenneth Hamilton performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his own personal safety and life by saving the life of an individual trapped inside a century-old mine shaft. Five Division of Forestry employees were awarded the Medal of Valor for their participation in what was described as the "Most difficult and dangerous operation of rescuing an unconscious man." The rescue scene: 130 feet below the surface and 2000 feet from the entrance of the century-old Hazard Mine on Volcano Creek near Foresthill in Placer County, California. The incident occurred when Clifford J. Cox, age 60, one of the mine owners and his nephew, Richard Ward, entered the mine on an exploration trip. Mr. Cox was apparently overcome by lack of air and fell unconscious, the younger Mr. Ward barely escaped himself. Mr. Ward summoned help from the Foresthill Forest Fire Station. Assistant State Forest Rangers Campbell, Dougherty, Fire Apparatus Engineers Hamilton, Quigley, and Fire Fighter Mower responded to the call for help. A rescue plan was formulated which eventually included other Divisions of Forestry personnel, inmates from the Iron Mountain Conservation Camp, and volunteers who assisted in the rescue efforts. Unfortunately, one volunteer died during the rescue

Tyler Hammond

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/25/1965

Special Service Award (Silver)

In March, 1965, in the Culver City area of Los Angeles County, Officer Tyler Hammond single-handedly captured an armed bank robber. Officer Hammond, a 17-year veteran of the California Highway Patrol, captured one of two gunmen who held up a bank at Selma Ave and Santa Monica Blvd., who were fleeing the scene with $50,000. Officer Hammond disregarded the potential danger and deadly consequences of a point-blank gunfire battle at the entrance to a crowed hotel when he confronted the armed bank robber and without additional assistance, apprehended one of the suspects. He performed an extraordinary act of heroism, at great risk to his safety and life, and no doubt was completely responsible in saving the lives of innocent bystanders in the streets in and around the scene of the crime. Officer Hammond is the embodiment of a true hero in service to the people of the state of California.

Melissa Handley

Officer

California Highway Patrol

11/4/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Melissa Handley, on November 4, 2001, performed an act of heroism at risk to her own personal safety when she pulled an accident victim from the path of a speeding vehicle.

At approximately 7:10 a.m., Officer Handley was dispatched to the scene of a traffic collision on the Cherry Avenue Signal Hill collector road for southbound Interstate 405 Freeway, in the city of Long Beach. The driver, Ms. Nora Rojas, lost control of her vehicle on the collector road, which was wet from a recent rainfall, and collided with a guardrail. Her vehicle became disabled and blocked the collector road. Fluid from Ms. Rojas' vehicle spilled onto the road, creating an additional hazard. Officer Handley notified the Los Angeles Communications Center and requested additional assistance to close the collector road. She activated the emergency lights on her patrol car to warn approaching traffic of the impending hazard. As Ms. Rojas walked toward the patrol car, she was talking on her cellular phone, inattentive to oncoming traffic. At the same time, a Chevrolet pickup truck, driven by Mr. David Green from Long Beach, came over the crest of the collector road at an excessive speed. Mr. Green's vehicle went into an uncontrolled skid as he tried to avoid Ms. Rojas and her vehicle. Realizing Ms. Rojas was in danger Officer Handley quickly exited the patrol car, grabbed Ms. Rojas and pulled her away from danger. The pickup truck narrowly missed Officer Handley and Ms. Rojas and collided with the open patrol car door before slamming into Ms. Rojas' vehicle.

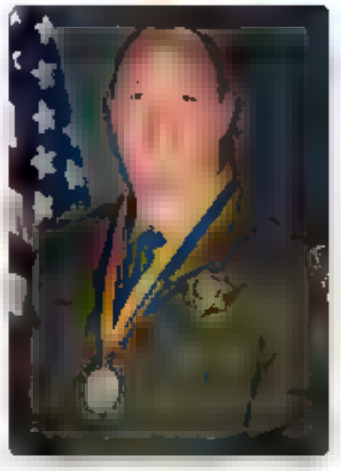
Daryl Hansen

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/13/2015

Special Service Award (Silver)



On April 13, 2015, at 3:53 a.m., Officer Darryl Hansen was on patrol with his partner, Officer Timothy Montoya, when they responded to a call of a vehicle on fire on an off ramp in the city of Santa Ana. Upon Officer Hansen and Officer Montoya's arrival at the off ramp, they observed the vehicle engulfed in flames under a tree. Officer Hansen approached the vehicle and observed a man lying on the ground a few feet from the vehicle, with a toddler walking around him. Officer Hansen immediately moved toward the vehicle and observed a woman slumped forward in the front right passenger seat, her face badly bloodied, with numerous major lacerations. Officer Montoya attempted to open the driver side door, but the door was inoperable due to damage sustained during the collision. Meanwhile, Officer Hansen made several unsuccessful attempts to remove the woman from the vehicle as the flames continued to grow. Officers Hansen and Montoya were able to grasp the woman and began to pull her through the open driver side window, despite the increasing heat and dangerously close flames. While removing her, Officer Montoya heard the sound of a crying baby from within the vehicle and stopped assisting Officer Hansen to investigate. Officer Montoya located a baby on the floor behind the driver seat, and removed her from the vehicle while Officer Hansen continued his attempt to remove the woman, utilizing all of his strength and energy. Officer Hansen was finally able to free the woman from the vehicle and pull her through the driver side window, placing her on the ground near the man and toddler. At this time, the surrounding brush and trees began to burn around the victims and officers. Finally, additional officers responded to the scene and assisted Officers Hansen and Montoya with moving the victims from the burning area to a safe location where medical aid could be provided.

Scott Hansen

Caltrans Highway Maintenance Worker

Department of Transportation

6/21/1993

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 8 20 a.m. Scott Hansen was trave ing on the Costa Mesa freeway when he saw a motorist weaving and crashing into sand-filled barricades and slamming into the concrete median. As Mr Hansen approached the motorist, he saw the driver, a woman, s umped behind the wheel of her automobi e She was unconscious after an insulin reaction Rea izing his Caltrans truck might be the on y way to save the woman's life, he responded immediate y by maneuvering his truck in front of the weaving car He s owed down until both vehicles were trave ing at a similar speed and let his foot off the acce erator, allowing the battered car to repeatedly hit the crash attenuator on the back of his truck. About 3 75 mi es from the initial point of impact, the car finally came to a stop. Mr. Hansen ca ed paramedics and the CHP for assistance.

Benjamin H. Harbor

Highway Landscape Leadingman

Department of Transportation

1/10/1966

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 10, 1966, Benjamin H. Harbor, a Highway Landscape Leadingman, was on duty trimming trees at Oak and Fell Streets in San Francisco with his coworker, Willie Davis, when an accident occurred on the Central Freeway above them. Benjamin ran to the scene accompanied by his coworker, as did some other Public Works maintenance workers, and they found a car overturned already in flames, with a young woman pleading for someone to help remove her baby from the auto. His coworker immediately crawled into the overturned vehicle and attempted to rescue the child but was unable to do so because the seat had broken loose and was lying atop the 2-year-old male child. Benjamin then entered the car from the other side, raised the seat, and cut off the child's seatbelt making it possible for Benjamin and his coworker to remove the infant just an instant before the car exploded and was completely enveloped in flames. Mr. Harbor disregarded the imminent danger of explosion and fatal burns to himself while removing the child from the burning automobile. Unfortunately, the child passed away later that evening from the serious injuries sustained in the high speed crash. Benjamin Harbor performed an extraordinary act of heroism, at great risk to his safety and life, in trying to save the life of another person.

Dave Harden

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/18/1984

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 18, 1984, Fire Captains Dave Harden, John Robbins and Dan Ward, performed extraordinary acts of heroism at great risk to their own personal safety and lives while rescuing a volunteer fireman who had fallen down a 35-foot embankment into an uncovered mine shaft while fighting a wildland fire on Carson Hill in Calaveras County. At approximately 12:09 AM, these men responded to an emergency call that a man was in a mine shaft. Despite burning debris and rocks falling into the shaft, Captain Harden rappelled down the dark, smoke-filled shaft to the victim 50 feet below, who was clinging to a fingerhold crevice in total darkness. Although Captain Harden was able to get a line around the victim, he began to slip further down the shaft of unknown depth. Captain Harden grabbed the victim's hand and yelled for assistance. Fire Captain Robbins, wearing a headlamp, rappelled down the shaft and, after considerable effort, the two men were able to lower the victim to the bottom of the shaft. Fire Captain Ward had also joined the rescue effort and was located some 20 feet down the shaft where he could act as a communication and equipment relay. Despite extremely hazardous conditions caused by smoke and falling debris, these men protected the victim until rigging could be set up to remove the severely injured fireman, almost three hours after he had fallen into the shaft. Because of their prolonged stay in the mine shaft, Fire Captains Harden, Robbins and Ward suffered from smoke inhalation, exhaustion, stress and hypothermia, requiring medical treatment.

Henry Harden

Caltrans Maintenance Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

1/20/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 20, 2004, California Department of Transportation employees Jonathan B Bevan, Steve Carro , Keith A Laub and Henry Harden performed acts of heroism at risk to their personal safety when they prevented an occupied vehicle from plummeting over a snowy mountain cliff At 2 10 P.M , an SUV hit a patch of icy roadway south of Big Bear on State Highway 38 and spun off the highway near Onyx Summit The vehic e landed on its side and was perched precariously against a tree on a slope - about 800 feet above the canyon with the engine still running, the tires still spinning, and the driver helplessly trapped inside. A retired Los Ange es police detective witnessed the accident and flagged down a Caltrans vehic e driven by Henry Harden. With the SUV slowly slipping down the mountainside, Mr Harden immediately radioed for help. Within minutes a Caltrans snowp ow driven by Keith Laub arrived. Soon thereafter, Jonathan Bevan and Steve Carro arrived on the scene. Jonathan Bevan and Steve Carroll provided the safety zone for Mr. Harden and Mr. Laub to work at securing the overturned vehic e to keep it from plummeting into the canyon. The situation was very dangerous, another vehicle lost control on the icy road and crashed within 15 feet of the snowp ows Mr Bevan and Mr. Carroll marked off the area with flares and began a flagging operation to control traffic and ensure that emergency vehicles co d gain access. They moved onlookers to a safe area and, to give vehicles more traction, applied cinders to the roadway Meanwhi e, at 8500 feet, with snow fa ing, Mr Laub took a chain from the snowplow, climbed down the dangerously steep and icy s ope, attached the chain to the SUV's axle and secured the other end to one of the Caltrans snowplows. Mr. Harden then climbed down the steep, icy inc ine, attached another chain to the SUV and secured the other end to a second snowp.ow. To stabilize the SUV, the snowplows were then positioned to draw the chains into a taut "V " Understandably the SUV's driver was visib y re ieved They monitored the vehicle and the driver until rescue crews arrived. Emergency personnel then pried the door open and carried the driver to safety, who was taken to a nearby hospital for evaluation and released the same day. Without a thought to their own personal safety, Mr Bevan, Mr Carro , Mr Harden and Mr Laub assisted in the rescue effort that saved the driver's life.

Edwin Hargrove

Supervising Tax Auditor

Board of Equalization

10/30/1977

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 4 00 pm, a car traveling northbound was cut off by another car, forcing the driver to swerve into northbound traffic. That car co ided head-on with a small sports car. At the same time, another car was struck from the rear, which in turn was hit by another vehicle. The driver of the sports car managed to escape when it burst into flames, but the 19 year o d female passenger was trapped inside. Edwin Hargrove was driving north in the vicinity of the accident site, approaching the Golden Gate To Plaza, when he heard the collision and saw the fire and smoke. The young woman was screaming for help. He ran to the burning sports car and pulled the victim out with the aid of another driver. In the process Mr. Hargrove's hair was singed. Both the driver and the fema e passenger suffered from a broken leg, cuts and scrapes. Mr. Hargrove's deed was especia y audab.e because he had a heart condition

Mike Harkness

Battlion Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

12/10/1996

Special Act Award (Gold)

CDF Batta ion Chief Mike Harkness, on December 10, 1996, performed extraordinary acts of heroism at great personal risk to his safety and life. During winter storm flooding in San Luis Obispo County at Las Tab es Creek, BC Harkness rescued a victim in the midd e of the creek perched on a grouping of trees At approximately 10:20 AM, the San Louis Obispo Emergency Command Center (ECC) received an emergency water rescue call from Mrs. Lu Rutters She described her situation as extreme. She was trapped in her vehicle by the fast moving water of Las Tab es Creek and heading downstream The ECC was able to advise Mrs Rutter how to kick out the rear window of her Ford Explorer, once the water pressure equalized. She managed to get out of her vehicle and cling onto trees in the creek and waited to be rescued. During this time, the water continued to rise in the creek and Mrs Rutters perch in the trees was becoming tenuous. She was physica ly exhausted and soaking wet. Las Tables Creek was flowing bank to bank, the stream bed was approximately 100' wide and Mrs. Rutters was 20 feet from the bank The distance from her position to the bank had large boils of water and appeared to be very deep. The creek was continuing to rise and large amounts of tree debris was being carried downstream impacting the trees Mrs. Rutters was ho ding on to. The trees had the possibility of being undermined at any moment During the time of assimilating the emergency crews for Mrs Rutters rescue, she was becoming more anxious to leave the trees she was clinging to. Emergency Personnel were worried that Mrs. Rutters would attempt to leave the trees, so a throw bag was established downstream in the event she went into the creek An anchor was placed on the bank and reluctantly it was decided to send Paid-Ca Firefighter Christopher Kirk across to the trees, with life preservers for Mrs Rutters, and establish a tether line for the water rescue team. BC Mike Harkness arrived and was briefed on the situation. Large amounts of debris was impacting the trees on which Mrs. Rutters and PCF Kirk were clinging The force of the water and the pounding of the debris was making their position extremely dangerous BC Harkness formulated his plan as the water rescue team was still 15 minutes away BC Harkness, with the he p of Fire Captain's Marshall and Dowling and other PCF's at the scene, began the time y rescue of Mrs Rutters BC Harkness entered the water and went to the trees by the established tether line. BC Harkness hooked Mrs. Rutters to the tether line and they both were swung into the creek and pulled out by support personnel Mrs. Rutters was taken immediate y into an ambulance for medical treatment. PCF Kirk was retrieved from the debris pi e by the water rescue team, which had just arrived It has to be noted that without the efforts of PCF Kirk and BC Harkness this situation wou d have ended in tragedy

Graydon Harn

Lieutenant

Department of Fish and Wildlife

2/25/1979

Special Act Award (Gold)

Lt. Graydon Harn stopped at a Napa drugstore to buy some medicine when he noticed a man holding a knife to the throat of a young woman clerk. Instead of shooting, Officer Harn succeeded in using his service revolver to strike the man on the head, disarming the suspect, and leading to his capture. Officer Harn placed his own life in jeopardy but eliminated the possibility of accidental injury to the victims of the robbery who would have been in the line of fire.

Chris Harris

Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/2/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officers Harris, Matulonis, and Pope, on April 2, 2004, combined efforts and performed an act of heroism at great risk to their own personal safety to rescue a suicidal victim from jumping from the Oakland Bay Bridge. At 7:10 p.m., the California Highway Patrol Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Team was requested to respond to the Oakland Bay Bridge to an incident involving a suicidal subject. Earlier in the day, a suicidal man climbed over the south rail on the upper deck of the Oakland Bay Bridge and perched himself on a six inch wide steel beam. This location is approximately 240 feet above the water of the San Francisco Bay. The man sat down on the beam and began to cut his arms with a razor blade. The San Francisco Police Department crisis negotiator team was requested, responded, and communicated with the man for several hours to no avail. The SWAT team leader began to formulate a plan of action to rescue/apprehend the man from his location that included SWAT Team members rappelling over the side of the bridge. Shortly after 11:00 p.m. the man appeared visibly tired and suffering from hypothermia when he escalated his self-mutilation with the razor blade and moved to a triangular support beam on the Bridge structure and began to lie down. This location afforded the best opportunity for a successful rescue. Officers Harris, Matulonis, and Pope geared themselves with rappel safety equipment and safety lines. Officer Matulonis took a position on the east side of the beam. Both officers simultaneously rappelled to and moved onto the beam, advancing toward the suicidal man's position. As soon as the man observed the officers approaching, he lunged at Officer Matulonis and physically engaged him. Officer Matulonis grabbed the lunging man with his arms, and Officer Harris swiftly moved in to assist and grab the combative subject to attempt to place a safety system around his waist. The man continued to violently struggle without regard to his own safety or the safety of the rappelling officers as he tried to bite, scratch, and pull both officers off of the beam. Officer Pope rappelled onto the beam to assist Officers Harris and Matulonis in subduing the man. All three rappelling officers were now struggling to prevent a totally unrestrained and extremely combative subject from falling to his death. Due to the precarious nature of the situation, a less then lethal beanbag round was fired at the man and struck the right side of his back. This momentarily stunned him and finally enabled and besieged officers to place a safety harness and a safety line on the man. As a result of the extraordinary and heroic efforts of the three SWAT members, the man was raised and moved over the Bridge rail for a successful rescue.

Mark Harris

Deputy

Other

2/5/2010

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

Homicide detectives from the Fresno County Sheriff's Office, including safety personnel from a ied agencies in the town of Minkler, attempted to serve a search warrant. The search warrant team, comprised of Detectives Mark Chapman, Mark Eaton, Joe Wahlenmaier and Robert McEwen, approached the house. The other personnel surrounded the perimeter of the home. The team knocked and announced their presence, and demanded entry several times. The team then broke down an exterior porch door to gain entry, however, they discovered another locked door. Detectives again announced their presence and demanded entry, yet the suspect refused. As Detective Wahlenmaier hit the door with a ram, the suspect, who was lying-in-wait, began shooting through the closed door. Detective Wahlenmaier was shot and immediate y co apsed. Detective McEwen instinctively covered Detective Wahlenmaier with his own body, to protect him from further harm. As the gun batt e ensued, Sergeant Lopez and Detective Toscano attempted for several minutes to pu Detective Wahlenmaier from the porch, however, his equipment caught on the door frame. Deputy Harris returned cover fire, allowing other deputies to free Detective Wahlenmaier while the gunfire continued. Deputy Harris sustained an injury to his right eye and the right side of his face from a fragmented bu et fired by the suspect. Deputy Harris continued to return cover fire. As the gun batt e continued, it was learned that Fresno County Sheriff's Detective Wahlenmaier was mortally wounded. An additional tragedy was the loss of Reed ey Po ice Officer Javier Bejar who was shot and ki ed by the suspect while aiding sheriff deputies, as you wi hear in the next citation. The standoff u timate y ended when the suspect took his own life.

Dain Hartman

Caltrans Equipment Operator I

Department of Transportation

2/2/2012

Special Service Award (Silver)

On February 2, 2012, around noon, California Department of Transportation Equipment Operators Dain Hartman and Dave Ackley were working on a rural section of Highway 36 in Humboldt County near the Dinsmore Airport when they noticed a small airplane on the horizon rocking back and forth, heading towards the airport's landing strip. As they watched, the airplane crossed the highway and touched down on the landing strip, bounced, went halfway down the runway, and then bounced again. The plane then started to climb, but suddenly nose-dived past the end of the runway and crashed on a grassy patch near the highway. Mr. Ackley and Mr. Hartman tried to radio for emergency services, but there was no signal. They quickly hopped over the airport fence and found a student pilot who had been thrown from the plane seconds before the crash. The flight instructor was still in the cockpit, badly injured. The student pilot called 911 from his cell phone, but was in such a state of shock that he handed his cellphone to Mr. Ackley. Suddenly, the front of the airplane was on fire. The student pilot and Mr. Ackley pulled the wounded flight instructor from the cockpit while Mr. Hartman sprayed the airplane with a fire extinguisher. The flames grew higher and when they reached the wings where the fuel is stored, the airplane exploded, sending a giant fireball into the sky, higher than nearby power lines. The wind blew the flames and the men moved the wounded flight instructor farther away as the surrounding grass began to catch on fire. Luckily, help soon arrived to administer first aid and extinguish the grass fire. With no regard for their own safety, Equipment Operators Dain Hartman and Dave Ackley's heroic service saved the lives of a student pilot and a flight instructor when their airplane crashed.

Christopher J. Harvey

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

10/28/2010

Special Service Award (Silver)

On October 28, 2010, at approximately 9:45 a.m., Caltrans Equipment Operator II Christopher J. Harvey was driving a state vehicle during his work shift on State Route 55 in Costa Mesa. As Mr. Harvey slowed for traffic, he was struck from behind and pushed forward, hitting the vehicle in front of him. Immediately following the three car collision, Mr. Harvey saw flames coming from the hood of the vehicle that hit him. He quickly contacted Caltrans dispatch and requested assistance. Mr. Harvey saw the driver was still inside the burning car. Smoke was coming out of its cabin and it was quickly becoming engulfed in flames. As traffic flowed by, Mr Harvey and a good Samaritan removed the injured driver from the vehicle and then Mr. Harvey went back to the burning vehicle to check and make sure there were no other occupants. A few minutes later the fire department, an ambulance, and the CHP arrived on the scene.

David L. Hatch

Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

6/30/1979

Special Act Award (Gold)

Hatch and his bear partner had just made an enforce stop on Route 163 in San Diego. The CHP patrol car was parked on the northbound should and a handcuffed prisoner was seated in the rear of the patrol car. As Officer Hatch stood on the should next to the patrol car he saw a car approaching on the shoulder at a high rate of speed. Officer Hatch shouted a warning to his partner and they both dived over the should to avoid the collision. Upon impact both cars went up in flames. The prisoner inside the patrol car began to plead for help and Officer Hatch could hear his pleas. The entire rear seat was surrounded by flames. Officer Hatch ran to the vehicle and after several tries, was able to pry the door open. Fearing an explosion, the victim told Officer Hatch to save himself. Officer Hatch pulled the victim out of the car and carried him to safety only seconds before the gas tank of the patrol car exploded. Officer Hatch then ran to the second car and entered the burning vehicle, pulling an unconscious female who was trapped between the seat and the dashboard to safety. Officer Hatch administered first aid and the woman remained consciousness.

Jeff Hatcher

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/27/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 6 43 a m on August 27, 2020, a private civi ian airp ane was departing from Benton Airpark and crashed just after take-off Sergeant Jeff Edgerton noticed from his office window that a private airp ane was attempting to takeoff at an unusua a titude that was not consistent with sustained flight. He oud y announced to everyone in the office that a plane was about to crash and mu tip e emp oyees exited the office towards the runway The airplane departed the runway complex and crashed into a steep, brush-fi ed ravine just north of Placer Street. Officer Jeffery Hatcher was one of the first officers out the door and arrived at the crash site moments after the crash They were joined by more officers, and proceeded down the embankment, where the first victim was found 10 feet from the burning fuselage. The second victim was found thrown 20 feet from the fuselage. While another officer worked to put the fire out around the first victim, Officer Hatcher he ped others move the second victim away from the fully engulfed fuselage. Officer Hatcher then returned to assist the first victim and ook for other victims. Officer Hatcher and other CHP personne carried the injured victims up the steep embankment to awaiting ambu ances Unfortunately, the two remaining occupants of the aircraft remained trapped inside and perished. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Hatcher went above and beyond the call of duty The State of Ca ifornia takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Va or to Ca ifornia Highway Patro Officer Jeffrey Hatcher

Joshua Hatfield

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/9/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 9, 2009, California Highway Patrol Officer Joshua Hatfield arrived at the scene of a head-on collision involving two vehicles. He immediately assessed the situation and rushed to the aid of an unconscious pregnant woman. She was located in the right front seat of a burning pick-up truck. Officer Hatfield checked the woman's vital signs and discovered she was alive. He attempted to open the passenger's door, but the truck was crushed as a result of the collision and the door was bound shut. Officer Hatfield reached into the truck through the shattered passenger window and attempted to remove the woman by grasping her clothing. The woman's clothing was burnt, causing it to tear free from his grasp. At this point, the fire was raging and the flames were dangerously close to the truck's gas tank. Without hesitation and despite inhaling toxic fumes and exposing himself to excruciating heat, Officer Hatfield reached inside the cab of the burning truck, hooked his left arm under the woman's arm and physically yanked her from the burning truck. Officer Hatfield carried her away from the vehicle and proceeded to extinguish the flames from her body with his own body and hands.

Unfortunately, even with the valiant efforts of Officer Hatfield, the woman and her unborn child did not survive. Officer Hatfield was transported to the Central Valley Medical Center and was treated for smoke inhalation and first degree burns to his face, hands, and arms.

Jeff Hawkins

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/20/2000

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Jeff Hawkins, Firefighters Joe Saunders, and Paul Carlos on, September 20, 2000, performed an act of heroism at risk to their personal safety by entering a victim's home to save a civilian At approximately 1 00 p.m., on September 19th, 2000, a wildfire started west of Concow Road, north of the Concow School and approximately 15 miles north of Oroville The fire continued to spread after burning 800 acres and scorching two residences. Shortly after 2 20 a m , on September 20th, 2000, Fire Captain Hawkins with Firefighters Joe Saunders and Paul Carlos from Engine 72 were checking two residents on Stagecoach Lane about 4 miles south of Nelson Bar Road After about 10 minutes, Captain Hawkins noticed the wind began to blow toward them and smoke was blowing over their heads and he noticed a firebrand ignited in the star thistle about 100 feet ahead of Engine 72. The firefighters pulled a hose line, but the fire grew in intensity and placed them all in danger Captain Hawkins disengaged the pump, repositioned Engine 72, noticed there were multiple spot fires ahead and behind them, and radioed for help The main fire was rapidly burning toward a home on Stagecoach Lane and Captain Hawkins became concerned for the two residents at the end of the lane because he felt they were trapped. Engine 71 drove south on Stagecoach Lane toward Engine 72 Fire Captain Sanford from Engine 71 radioed Captain Hawkins that he would go to the first house and attempt to protect it. Engine 72 had to abandon the hose line, move Engine 72 to the driveway of the first house and found the mobile home occupants Ray and Richard McCarty attempting to save their residence. Fire Captain Hawkins knew Engine 72 must evacuate the McCarty's because the smoke and fire conditions were very serious around the residence The wildfire was rapidly approaching from the east driven by strong northeast wind Without regard for their own lives, the personnel of Engine 72 placed Ray and Richard McCarty into the cab of Engine 72, drove them through blinding smoke and flames engulfing the engine to a safer location near Stagecoach Lane and Nelson Bar Road

Russell Hawkins

Highway Maintenance-III

Department of Transportation

1/27/1970

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 27, 1970, about 3:20 p.m., Russell Hawkins, Highway Maintenance Man-III, was returning to the Central Maintenance yard in Los Angeles after a day of erecting highway signs. He was driving with a coworker, Rodney Neal, travelling southbound on the Golden State Freeway just south of Broadway. "We saw a big metal box, approximately 6 feet long, a foot wide and 18 inches high lying between the #3 and #4 lanes, with debris scattered around it." Russell told his coworker that they needed to stop and remove it as it was a hazard. Russell pulled over to the shoulder and both he and Mr. Neal carried the box back to the shoulder. There was only moderate traffic at the time. Russell's coworker was just about to rake up the debris out of the travel-way, while he went back to flag the moderate traffic from the #4 to the #3 lane. Then Russell looked up and saw a huge, cab-over diesel tractor-trailer loaded with scrap car bodies driving in the right lane, right behind a 4-door Plymouth sedan with a woman driver. He realized it was coming in too fast to stop for the slowing traffic, and he knew it was going to hit approximately in the place where he was standing, so he ran for safety to the on-ramp. There was a grinding crash. ... an eyewitness driving in the lane to the left of the huge diesel truck stated: "The big truck plowed into the back of the woman in the Plymouth. It took her right along with it. ... the truck driver cut to the left and jackknifed his truck ... and he kept pushing her car, she went into another car, and both passenger cars were turned completely around and heading north. The diesel truck caught on fire. I stopped 50-60 feet away, and the huge truck was on its right side, as it had slid clear across the freeway, blocking three lanes." After Russell heard the crash, he looked up and saw the burning truck, and in front of it the Plymouth, which was also on fire. Russell saw the truck driver get out of his rig, and the three passengers of the second car were getting out of theirs, but there was no sign of life from the burning Plymouth. Russell ran over right away to see if the people in it were injured, thinking "someone would be dead among such a mass of wreckage." The back end of the car was on fire, as the gas tank had exploded. When Russell got to the car, he saw just one woman by herself, laying in the backseat and unconscious, and he knew he had to get her out before the whole car exploded and become totally engulfed in flames. He tried the back door on the driver's side, but it was jammed shut and he couldn't open it. Russell then got inside through the driver's front door, behind the wheel. Russell pulled the woman over the front seat and out of the front door. There was spilled gasoline on the ground and the trunk area was now fully ablaze. Russell couldn't discern any apparent injury to the woman, so he grabbed her under the arms and dragged her across the freeway to the shoulder on the far side, fearing "the car was about to blow up any minute." Russell's coworker saw the entire scene unfold before him, but only able to run for cover out of the way of the oncoming truck. He wanted to help Russell, but could see there was scarcely enough room in the smashed car for even Russell to crawl inside. The coworker watched Russell bring the woman across the freeway, helped cover her with his coat, and heard Russell Hawkins radio Los Angeles Communications for an ambulance. He also saw Mr. Hawkins later try to put out the fire in the car with an extinguisher, to no avail. The accident victim later told the Highway Patrol that Russell Hawkins had saved her life and "should be given recognition for it." Russell Hawkins performed an extraordinary act of heroism, at great risk to his safety and life, in saving the life of another person, and is truly a courageous hero.

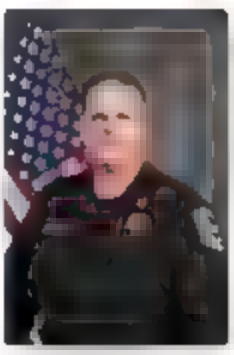
Sims Hawkins

Battalion Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

11/18/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)



On November 8, 2018 the Camp Fire ignited near the community of Pulga in northeastern Butte County, California. The fire burned under extreme topographic, fuel and weather conditions. Driven by strong winds, the fire spread over seven and a half miles in the first hour and a half, burning into the town of Paradise and neighboring communities of Concow, Magalia and Butte Creek Canyon. The fire's spread impacted nearly 40,000 residents within the first few hours, causing many residents to become trapped by fire. California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Battalion Chief Sims Hawkins was assigned to the Camp Fire overseeing firefighting operations in the central portion of Paradise. At around 11:30 a.m. Chief Hawkins was contacted by a woman who stated that her elderly parents were trapped by the fire at their home on Paragalia Way. Realizing that the location was in a neighboring division and that the commanding officer for that division was himself involved with rescuing civilians, Chief Hawkins decided to try and drive to the home himself. While traversing town roads en route to the home, Chief Hawkins encountered many obstacles including evacuating citizens, blocked roads, abandoned cars, heavy smoke, ember cast, flames, downed trees and fallen utility poles, which he navigated around and through. As Chief Hawkins turned onto Paragalia Way, he encountered heavy fire conditions and realized that there was a significant risk that he might not make it out himself. The GPS navigation indicated that the home would be near the end of the road. Chief Hawkins navigated blindly through a wall of flame, embers, and heavy black smoke as the navigation advised him, "Your address is on the left." As he opened his truck door, smoke blew in and embers entered his vehicle. Having had no time to fully dress for the extreme fire conditions, Chief Hawkins suffered small burn injuries to his neck, chest and stomach from the blowing embers. Chief Hawkins could hear screams of terror in the distance. Following the screams, he ran up a walking path near the home to a double gate, where he could only open one side and squeeze through. Now in the front yard area, he could see that the home was almost completely involved in fire. He found an elderly couple, huddled together on the ground in a small, green, unburned area near the southeast corner of the burning house. The elderly man required a walker to walk, so Chief Hawkins instructed him to stand up and hold on to his walker. He then grabbed the man in a bear hug fashion and partially carried him toward the gate while the woman followed. The gate was too narrow to carry the man through with his walker, so Chief Hawkins slid the walker through, then the man and then himself. As he turned around he noticed the woman had retreated due to the increasing fire conditions. Chief Hawkins carried the man to his truck and loaded him into the front passenger seat. As he did so, thousands of embers blew into the cab of the truck. Chief Hawkins returned to look for the woman. He found her, lifted her in a firefighter carry position, carried her to the truck, and loaded her inside. With heavy fire and smoke conditions, he was unable to see the roadway. Instead, he relied on his GPS navigation to keep him on the roadway as he drove slowly. Chief Hawkins proceeded to the intersection of Clark and Billie Roads, where he met a waiting ambulance and transferred the couple into the care of the paramedics. Chief Hawkins recalled the woman saying over and over "you are our savior, you are our savior." If it were not for the heroic actions of Chief Hawkins, it was impossible that Mr. and Mrs. Parker would not have survived the Camp Fire. Chief Hawkins continued operating as division group supervisor for 13 days on the Camp Fire from November 8, 2018, to November 20, 2018. With no regard for his own safety, Chief Hawkins went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Battalion Chief Sims Hawkins.

Joseph Heightman

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/30/2011

Special Service Award (Silver)

On October, 30, 2011, at approximately 10 46 a m , California Highway Patrol Officer Joseph Heightman was flagged down by a man who told him a car had left the roadway and hit a chain link fence and tree in Escondido Officer Heightman quickly found the car and saw the driver was unconscious and appeared to be suffering from a seizure Clearing away the tree branches, Officer Heightman got into the backseat and immediately held the driver's head and neck to protect his spine and keep his airway open. After a few minutes, flames began to enter the vehicle. Officer Heightman attempted to remove the driver but his seatbelt was not functioning He used his pocket knife to cut the seatbelt, but the driver's legs were trapped underneath the steering column. Although he couldn't see through the smoke, Officer Heightman reached in and found the steering wheel adjustment handle, allowing him to move the steering wheel and free the driver's legs He removed the man from the driver's seat and, supporting his head and neck, dragged him to safety just as the vehicle became totally engulfed in flames.

Charles M. Heinbach, Jr.

State Forest Ranger I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/19/1985

Special Service Award (Silver)

On June 19, 1985, State Forest Ranger (then Fire Captain) Charles M Heinbach, Jr., performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his personal safety, while providing basic life support techniques to a young man involved in a major head-on collision on Highway 49 in the Mariposa area. Ranger Heinbach, as a member of a Forestry fire station crew responding to the accident, arrived at the scene at 10 50 p.m. After assessing the victims in one vehicle, he then conducted a primary survey of the driver in the other vehicle, who was pinned in the wreckage and had been reported dead by the emergency personnel already on the scene Their initial survey revealed the victim was pulseless and not breathing due to an interference in his airway Although gasoline was leaking from the ruptured gas tank, Ranger Heinbach, a former paramedic, decided there was no time to lay a safety line to protect the vehicle from sparks that could cause a fire or an explosion Instead, placing his own life in jeopardy, Ranger Heinbach decided to re-check the young man and he crawled into the wreck. After gaining access to the victim and supporting the cervical area, he opened the victim's airway by extension, and the victim's breathing and a pulse were restored spontaneously Despite the imminent threat of an explosion at any time, Ranger Heinbach continued this life support technique throughout the additional 30 minutes required to extricate the 16-year old victim from the vehicle. Without Ranger Heinbach's reassessment of the young man and thereafter administering respiration support techniques that revived the victim to life again, together with the Ranger's courage by remaining in a vehicle under threat of explosion to maintain the life-saving techniques while personnel worked to extricate the victim, the young man's survival and ultimate full recovery would have not been possible.

Jason T. Heinz

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

12/28/2016

Special Service Award (Silver)

Around midnight on December 28, 2016, a vehicle traveling on Hwy 50 left the roadway, became airborn and landed upside down quite a distance off the highway in the American River. In the vehicle was a family of four. Caltrans Equipment Operator II Jason Heinz had just began his shift at the Kyburz Maintenance Yard. Mr. Heinz responded to Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor Shawn Morgan's call for assistance at Pott's Turnout. When he arrived on scene, on-lookers reported there was a car on its roof in the river and that people were trapped inside. Mr. Heinz immediately climbed down the rocks and boulders, assessed the situation and returned over and over to his vehicle to get different tools that he attempted to use to gain access to the car to release the trapped passengers. None of the tools were effective. Once the car was righted and the driver of the vehicle was on the river bank, Mr. Heinz gave him his coat to provide heat and protection from the cold weather, and stayed with the driver until emergency medical personnel arrived on scene. All victims were taken to the hospital, but the boy did not survive. The night this happened, although not snowing at the time, there was an accumulation of snow on the ground and the temperature was in the 20's. With no regard for his own safety, Mr. Heinz's heroic service saved three lives. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to Caltrans Equipment Operator II Jason Heinz.

Andrew Helble

State Park Peace Officer (Lifeguard)

Department of Parks and Recreation

9/29/2018

Special Service Award (Silver)

On September 29, 2018, State Park Peace Officer Andrew Helble was off duty and diving for lobster on opening day of lobster season in the ocean off Beacon's Beach with his brother-in-law and a friend on a kayak, when the three friends heard someone scream, "I got bit! I got bit!" They spotted a 13-year-old boy, who had also been diving for lobster, approximately 80 yards away and about 100 yards from shore. The victim saw the kayak group and began swimming toward them. Officer Helble and his brother-in-law swam approximately 60 yards to reach the victim, who covered about 20 yards on his own. Meanwhile, Officer Helble's friend paddled the kayak over. Upon reaching the victim, Officer Helble observed major traumatic injuries on his face, neck, shoulder and back consistent with a shark attack. He assisted the bloodied teen onto the kayak and stabilized the injured diver on the unsteady and now overloaded single-person kayak while his friend paddled the craft through the surfline to shore. Officer Helble, an emergency medical technician, used his training to stop the life-threatening bleeding and prevent the onset of shock while swimming alongside the kayak. Multiple witnesses reported that the aggressive shark — thought to be a 10- to 12-foot great white — trailed the group as they made their way toward shore. The rescuers reached the beach and were met by Encinitas lifeguards, who had been summoned by multiple 911 calls. Once ashore, Officer Helble assisted the responding on-duty lifeguards with patient care, scene management and landing a medical transport helicopter. One of those 911 callers was the victim's mother, who was on the beach, heard her son's screams and witnessed his rescue. Without the assistance of Officer Helble and his friends, the victim's mother believes her son would have died in the water due to his extensive injuries, he ultimately required over a thousand stitches. His thankful mother said of his rescuers, "It absolutely required courage for them to respond to his call for help and not swim away to save their own lives. And, with the shark still in the area, they risked their lives to save my son. I'll be forever grateful." With no regard for his own safety, Officer Helble went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Parks and Recreation State Park Peace Officer Andrew Helble.

Craig Heller

Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/28/1996

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 2:46 a.m., a tractor/trailer driven collided with another tractor/trailer which had slowed down due to a previous traffic collision at Interstate 10 and Holt Boulevard. The collision involved a tractor/trailer and two passenger vehicles. The driver had dozed off, unaware of the slow moving traffic and had not taken any evasive action to prevent an accident. His vehicle then veered to the left into the number two and three lanes. The tractor/trailer, still out of control, struck five passenger vehicles and passed two tractor/trailers colliding with the rear trailer of a set of double trailers in the number four lane. The tractor burst into flames. His legs were trapped by the dashboard and engine components which collapsed upon impact. Officers on the scene broadcasted the collision into the Inland Communications Center and went to the aid of the drivers in the passenger cars unaware the driver of the burning tractor was still inside. Officers Heller, Avila, Finn and Battle responded to the scene and upon arrive heard the trapped driver's cries for help and saw the flames rapidly spreading from the tractor to the trailer, as well as to the trailer it had struck. The officers attempted to open the driver's side door to free the driver but the severity of the collision left the door twisted and jammed closed. The officer tried to reassure the driver as they reached into the burning truck, gasping the driver's shoulders and arms in an attempt to pull him free. As Officers Finn and Battle attempted to free the driver, Officers Heller and Avila doused the trapped driver with fire extinguishers and attempted to pull the jammed door open. The flames were spreading rapidly through the cab of the truck to the sleeper berth and upholstery. The driver was still conscious and calling for help. The entire right side of the tractor, its trailer, and the trailer it had struck were on fire. The tractor's fuel tank had ruptured and was rushing down the traffic lanes towards the other vehicles. The officer continued their efforts to free the trapped driver as the flames spread. All four officers remained with the driver, still trying to free him and extinguish the flames. After depleting several fire extinguishers and unable to pry the tractor door open, they were forced to move to a place of safety due to the intensity of the fire. At this point, the tractor and trailer were fully engulfed, with flames reaching 30 to 40 feet in the air. Unfortunately, the driver could not be saved and sustained fatal injuries from the collision and fire.

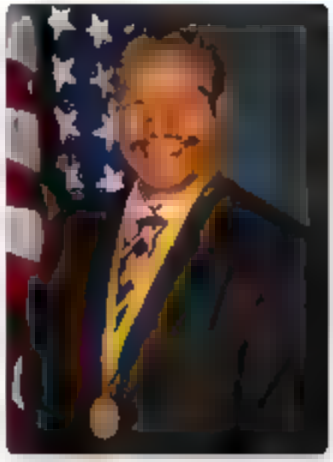
Steven Hellon

Senior Caltrans Photographer

Department of Transportation

12/16/2014

Special Act Award (Gold)



On December 16, 2014, at approximately 1:15 p.m., California Department of Transportation Senior Caltrans Photographer Steven Hellon was on assignment and taking photos of the Amtrak train station in Merced. Mr. Hellon was kneeling in front of a train, taking photos as it was leaving the station, when he noticed a woman running along the platform, frantically trying to board the train as it was pulling away. The woman started banging on the side of the train with her hand, but it continued forward. Suddenly, the woman lost her footing and fell between the platform and the moving train. Seeing the woman fall, Mr. Hellon dropped his camera and without hesitation, sprinted over to where she was lying on the tracks. Sliding down the tracks on his backside, Mr. Hellon placed his arms under her arms, lurched backwards with all his might, and pulled the woman free seconds before the wheels of the train rolled over the spot where her legs had been.

Chris Hendricks

State Park Peace Officer

Department of Parks and Recreation

5/4/2019

Special Service Award (Silver)

On May 4, 2019, shortly before midnight, State Park Peace Officer Chris Hendricks and his K-9 partner, Janko, were on duty at Oceano Dunes State Vehicle Recreation Area with State Park Peace Officer Brett Weber. While they were on patrol, dispatch advised them of an active shooting in the beach camping area. Multiple shots had been fired from what appeared to be an automatic weapon. Numerous victims were down with gunshot wounds and dozens of others were attempting to flee to safety. Officers Hendricks and Weber immediately responded to the scene to assist the victims. When Officers Hendricks and Weber arrived on scene, they found pure chaos. Over 300 people were crying and running for safety, while others flagged down the officers to plead for assistance for friends who had been shot. Officers Hendricks and Weber deployed their weapons and attempted to locate the shooter. While they searched, someone flagged down the officers and directed them to a victim with gunshot wounds. They quickly assessed that the wounds were not life-threatening and instructed bystanders to keep applying direct pressure. They continued their search for the shooter. The officers asked people if they knew where the shooter was and were directed toward a trailer. They entered the trailer, but the shooter was not inside. At this point, the officers realized that the active shooting had ceased and they transitioned from finding the shooter to treating the injured victims. One victim had at least two gunshot wounds, one to the upper chest and one to the back. While the officers were treating these wounds, a group of people ran to them screaming that there was another victim nearby with a serious gunshot wound to his upper leg. Realizing the seriousness of the second victim's wound location, Officer Hendricks advised Officer Weber to continue treating the first victim while he ran to the second victim to begin assessing his wound. As Officer Hendricks arrived, the gunshot victim was screaming in agony. Several dozen bystanders were crowding around the victim and acting out of control, causing Officer Hendricks to fear for his own safety. He ordered everyone to get back so he could help the victim. He applied a tourniquet to the victim's left leg and was able to stop the bleeding. Officer Hendricks loaded the victim into a CAL FIRE truck that had arrived and the CAL FIRE medics transported the victim off the beach. While this event was unfolding, the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Department deputies working in the Oceano area responded to the scene. An hours-long manhunt ensued through the night, with multiple state park peace officers and San Luis Obispo County Sheriff deputies searching the area. Through this collaborative effort, the sheriff's department was able to locate and arrest the suspect the following day. The courage and bravery Officer Hendricks displayed was nothing short of heroic. His courageous actions helped to rescue dozens of innocent people, prevent more from being shot and save the lives of two gunshot victims. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Hendricks went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Parks and Recreation State Park Peace Officer Chris Hendricks.

Dr. Allen F. Hendy

Staff Psychiatrist

Department of Mental Hygiene

8/12/1968

Special Act Award (Gold)

Chief Security Officer Alton Hoxie, Frank Brignoli, Assistant Superintendent of Nursing Services and Dr. Allen F Hendy were at the Patton psychiatric hospital when a gunman, a former patient, arrived with a hostage at the hospital's admission office at noon He had come back to Patton "desperate to seek and help and a doctor". The gunman had already shot his wife and then forced a fellow employee he took as hostage to drive him to a bar in Cucamonga where he shot a family friend. Mr. Hoxie, Mr. Brignoli and Dr. Hendy talked steadily to the ex-patient who was pressing a gun to the hostage's head The three eventually quieted the gunman who released the hostage. They continued to talk to the man, "You've shot enough people " Mr Brignoli told the gunman, " If you want help, then give up the gun." The man then gave up the gun and surrendered to police.

Scott Hennessy

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/11/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 3:00 a.m. on December 11, 2008, California Highway Patrol Officer Scott Hennessy and his partner, Officer Karl Steinkraus, responded to a call of a vehicle collision on southbound I-280 north of Farmhill Road in San Mateo County. Upon arrival, they found a car blocking the number one lane with major collision damage, and an overturned SUV on fire in the number three lane. While Officer Steinkraus proceeded to help the two victims in the car, Officer Hennessy attempted to look into the burning SUV, but was having difficulty seeing inside due to the intense flames engulfing the SUV. Officer Hennessy quickly moved to the rear of the SUV where he found a man inside who was yelling and frantically kicking at the windows. The man could not kick out the back windows of the vehicle to escape and the flames were intensifying with each passing moment. Despite the great intensity of the fire and heat, and the fact that the vehicle was nearly engulfed by the flames, Officer Hennessy got close enough to the vehicle, pulled his baton and broke out the rear window of the SUV. He then grabbed the man's legs and pulled him out of the SUV to safety.

The quick action of Officer Hennessy, without regard for his own safety, prevented the death or serious injury to the man.

Jesse Hernandez

Specialist, California Army National Guard

California Military Department

10/18/2015

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 18, 2015, at 8:30 p.m., Private First Class Jesse Hernandez was on his way to work at the North County Correctional Facility when he noticed flames coming from the rear engine compartment of a large charter bus stopped on the freeway. He immediately pulled over to render aid. As he ran towards the bus, Private First Class Hernandez saw that several passengers were frantically hitting and kicking the exit door, which appeared to be stuck, trapping everyone inside. Without hesitation, Private First Class Hernandez forced open the door, rescuing all forty-two trapped passengers. Then, in complete and total disregard for his own safety, Private First Class Hernandez entered the smoke filled bus and checked the entire passenger compartment for remaining people. Due to Private First Class Hernandez' swift actions, no passengers were seriously injured. His actions demonstrate unwavering courage and reflect great credit upon himself, the California Military Department and the State of California.

Robert Hernandez

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

8/3/2022

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the morning of August 3, 2022, Equipment Operator II Robert Hernandez and Highway Maintenance Worker Nicholas Macias were on duty when they noticed a sedan had crashed into a tree while exiting Highway 99. Flames were emitting from its engine compartment. The two skillfully maneuvered their Caltrans vehicle up the off-ramp, blocked the lane and started traffic control to protect the crashed vehicle and pedestrians, who were near the scene, from the vehicles exiting the highway. Noticing the driver was still in the vehicle and recognizing the danger the fire posed to the driver, citizens on foot, and other motorists, Mr. Macias quickly retrieved a fire extinguisher, ran towards the crash, and successfully extinguished the fire before the sedan was fully engulfed, while Mr. Hernandez maintained traffic control and kept people safely back. With the fire successfully extinguished, the trapped and injured driver was safely extracted. Facing great personal risk, the actions of Mr. Hernandez and Mr. Macias helped save the life of the injured driver and prevented potential injuries to pedestrians and other motorists. The State of California takes great pride in presenting a Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation Equipment Operator II Robert Hernandez for his act of heroism extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Jamie Hill

Electrician

Department of Transportation

9/29/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 29, 2010, at approximately 10:05 a m , E ectrician Jamie Hi was performing routine traffic signal maintenance in downtown Stockton when he observed a vehicle driving erratically down a surface street As he got closer he saw a man in the passenger side, a carjacker, violently attacking the fema e driver Mr Hi ca ed dispatch to report the vehic e's license plate number The car stopped sudden y and the woman, who was pregnant, fled the vehic e The carjacker jumped out of the car, ran after her and tried to catch her. With no thought to whether or not the carjacker had a weapon, Mr. Hill quickly got out of his work vehicle and jumped in between the woman and the attacker, immediately halting the assault. The carjacker fled the scene and Mr. Hill comforted the woman until the Stockton police arrived

Royce Hiner

Highway Maintenance Leadworker

Department of Transportation

6/26/2018

Special Service Award (Silver)

On July 25, 2018, Royce Hiner and co-worker Steven Hawthorne were traveling south on Interstate 5 towards Corning on an irrigation call. While in route, they came upon a van that was on fire. Hiner retrieved a fire extinguisher while Hawthorne called the incident into dispatch. When Hiner got to the vehicle, the owner was running around frantically trying to put the fire out. Hiner advised the man to get away from the vehicle and worked to free a dog still in the vehicle. While trying to remove the dog from the vehicle, the owner tried multiple times to get back into the vehicle for possessions. Hiner told the man to stay out of the vehicle and restrained him several times to keep him from doing so. As Hiner was pulling the man from the vehicle the last time, it burst into flames. The owner panicked, thinking his children were still in the van. Hiner, along with a female off-duty first responder, kept the man from getting near the vehicle. The three children were safe and accounted for in a different bystander's vehicle, along with the man's wife. The man then went into a seizure. When deemed safe, Hiner and the first responder pulled the man further away from the burning vehicle. The vehicle's fire then spread to nearby vegetation, threatening homes and prompting voluntary evacuations. Fire personnel then arrived and extinguished the flames. Hiner was later treated for smoke inhalation at a nearby hospital. With no regard for his own safety, Mr. Hiner went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation Highway Maintenance Leadworker Royce Hiner

Bruce T. Hinman

Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/26/1995

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Bruce T Hinman, on September 26, 1995, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at risk to his personal safety to protect the three people from an intoxicated driver. This act of courage ultimately cost Officer Hinman his life At approximately 9 40 p.m., Officer Hinman arrived at the scene of a stranded vehicle in the gore point at the split between US 101 and State Route 170. Upon his arrival, Officer Hinman contacted one of the three young occupants (one male, two female) of the vehicle and escorted him to a Call Box to obtain assistance Officer Hinman then returned to the disabled vehicle which still contained two passengers. Realizing the car was in a dangerous position, he pushed the vehicle by hand to a location farther into the gore point. Officer Hinman then return to the front of the vehicle and monitored traffic while the driver used the Call Box Shortly afterwards, Officer Hinman saw a vehicle approaching the rear of the disabled vehicle. The subsequent accident investigation concluded Officer Hinman attempted to wave off the driver of the errant vehicle as it approached the disabled vehicle. As the vehicle came closer, Officer Hinman attempted to evade it, but it was too late The errant vehicle struck the rear of the disable vehicle also striking Officer Hinman It was clear that Officer Hinman was attempting to protect the passengers in the car and this selfless heroic act ultimately cost him his life. Officer Hinman passed away on October 3, 1995

Annette Hirschi

Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/19/1990

Special Act Award (Gold)

State Traffic Officers Thomas R Greenstone, Annette Hirschi and Craig E Muehleisen, on January 19, 1990, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to their personal safety and life in rescuing a woman and a ten-year-old child from a burning wooden residence. At approximately 1:00 am Officers Greenstone and Hirschi were entering Interstate 5 northbound in the city of Leucadia when they observed thick smoke near a gasoline station located west of the freeway Upon arrival at the location they observed thick smoke coming from the two-story house next to the gasoline station. Observing flames inside the rear portion of the house, the officers began yelling to alert any occupants Within seconds, a female exited down the outside stairway As officers escorted her to safety she was unable to confirm whether others were in the house. Officer Greenstone proceeded to work his way through thick smoke outside the residence to a partially opened door. Hearing coughing and crying sounds coming from the room, he entered the room on his hands and knees. With only an 18" air space he moved through the dense smoke to an area near the far corner where he thought he saw a bed Unable to locate anyone and overcome by smoke he was forced to retreat. Unwilling to give up both Officers Hirschi and Greenstone made two more attempts to locate any occupants, before being forced to retreat. Refreshed, Officer Hirschi entered the room again, and within seconds the beam of her flashlight illuminated a white object moving on the floor approximately five feet away As she approached the object she saw it was a child Grabbing her around the waist, she dragged her toward the exit. As she reached the door, Officer Greenstone took the child and handed her to Officer Muehleisen, who had just arrived on the scene. Upon being advised that there were probably more people inside, Officer Muehleisen approached the open door. Despite the ever present danger with windows popping and the ceiling ablaze and a tremendous amount of heat being generated by the flames, he placed a scarf around his face, knelt down and crawled into the room. Forced back twice by the smoke and flames, the officers moved away from the burning structure

Mark Hofer

State Park Peace Officer

Department of Parks and Recreation

7/26/2018

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the morning of July 26, 2018, Officers Mark Hofer and Michae Van Pelt responded to the Carr Fire to ensure no one was trapped on or around Whiskey Town Lake The officers were a so tasked with preventing the loss of any more lake vessels and with supporting other fire suppression activities. Most of the areas where the officers were working were iso ated and unreachable by fire trucks or air support. The officers towed their trailer and patro boat to the ake to .aunch it, but, with the boat's high c earance, downed power lines and trees, and fire on all sides, they had difficulty getting through Eventua y, they were able to launch their patro boat, which was equipped with fire hoses and firefighting equipment, and spent a long day doing fire suppression activity on the lake. At about 7 p.m., the fire activity was getting increasingly dangerous, so they were ordered off the lake. As other officers tried to get the rangers out, there was a fire pattern known as a "fire tornado" that had never been seen before. Fire kept crossing their path and was all around the officers, who had to figure out new routes and improvise to get out of the area. Officer Hofer later showed other rangers a video of the flames touching the vessel. Pub ic Safety Chief Aaron Wright asked him what made him think to record the evacuation, and he said, "I thought we were going to die and I wanted it recorded " The two officers went back early the next day on the same assignment, with the fire sti extreme y active This time their patrol boat broke down on the water, likely due to heat damage from the day before. With no one able to get to them, little to no radio communication because the tower burned down, and fire on all sides, Officers Hofer and Van Pelt had to figure out how to get out to safety. Being resourcefu , they used their fire suppression hose as a propulsion system to get back to shore Officer Hofer worked 23 days straight on the Vesse Task Force, a 24-hour detail that was so successful, the task force was asked to follow the front ines of the fire from Whiskey Town Lake to Trinity Lake and then Shasta Lake The task force went from one vessel to eight vessels and multiple agencies working together by the end. They assisted with fire suppression activities, provided medical support to line staff, performed emergency evacuations, transported more than 3,500 firefighters to the front lines, and acted as scouts for the other units that were fighting the fire. Officer Hofer's actions helped save lives during the Carr Fire in Shasta and Trinity Counties The fire, one of the largest in Ca ifornia history, started on July 23, 2018, and burned more than 229,000 acres. It took three ives and destroyed almost 2,000 structures. His work required long days in terrib e conditions that were mentally and physically draining, yet he represented California with professionalism and courage during all of the chaos and danger. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Hofer went above and beyond the call of duty The State of Ca ifornia takes great pride in presenting this Si ver Meda of Valor to Department of Parks and Recreation State Park Peace Officer Mark Hofer

Lucille Holguin

Legislative Analyst

Department of General Services

10/20/1994

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 20, 1994, an elderly man was sitting at a bus stop near Capitol Avenue and 16th Street when a suspect approached him and demanded his wallet. When the victim did not give the suspect his wallet, the suspect stabbed him the arm with a knife. Ms. Contreras Holguin was driving in the area when she observed the victim trying to get away from the suspect. Ms. Contreras Holguin yelled at the suspect to leave the victim alone. The suspect approached Ms. Contreras Holguin's car and made threatening gestures at her. Ms. Contreras Holguin edged her car toward the victim and the suspect until she was able to block the suspect and get the victim into her car. She drove the victim to Sutter General Hospital where he was treated for a laceration on his arm.

Ryan Hollowell

Firefighter I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

5/22/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 22, 2008, the crew on Engine 1675 was assigned to Division "O" on the Summit fire, which was burning in Santa Clara and Santa Cruz Counties. At approximate y 9 45 am, the crew was requested to go to a residence on Dove Lane to search for a previously evacuated resident who was last seen running back up his driveway toward his residence. Despite great persona risk, the crew drove to the residence. The fire was "crowning" and burning intensely in the heavy vegetation on both sides of the access road, and the winds were b owing at 40 to 50 miles per hour. When the crew arrived at the residence driveway, the flames were so intense that they co d not drive any further so they backed up to a safe area and positioned the engine for a quick evacuation. Captain Gibble instructed Firefighter Efflandt to stay with the engine to act as a lookout for increased fire behavior and other hazards whi e he and Firefighters Hollowell and Blythe headed up the driveway on foot to search for the missing resident. Exposed to intense heat and smoke from the burning residence and with nearby propane tanks venting and blowing up in ground-shaking explosions, the crew retreated from the residence only after a thorough search of the area and repeated attempts to garner a response from the resident fai ed It was later determined that the resident had fled to safety. The crew from Engine 1675 is to be commended for their dedication to duty and service despite the great danger to their personal safety The State of California takes great pride in presenting Fire Captain Rick Lee Gibble, and Firefighters Steven W B ythe, Kyle Efflandt, and Ryan Ho owe , these Go d Meda s of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service

Paul G. Holman

State Park Ranger

Department of Parks and Recreation

6/4/1983

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 4, 1983, at approximately 11 30 a m , State Park Rangers Paul G Holman and William L. Robinson responded to an emergency call that a young woman was caught in Upper Green Valley Falls at Cuyamaca State Park. The victim's foot was wedged in the boulders beneath a ten foot cascade of icy water and her head was being held above water by an injured male companion. Secured by a life line, Ranger Robinson plunged into the cascade, relieved the victim's friend and attempted to fasten ropes around the woman for support. Failing, he positioned himself precariously on a slippery ledge above the victim and continued to hold her head out of the water. Ranger Holman joined Ranger Robinson and stood below the woman on a small rock trying in vain to overcome the force of the water and free her trapped foot. By now the victim was experiencing difficulty breathing The rangers attempted to provide lifesaving air with a rubber hose, but the victim, suffering from the extreme cold, cramped her jaw closed Approximately 15 minutes later, a forestry crew lowered an air pack to the rangers. With the air pack securely fastened, park personnel asked for volunteers from a crowd of approximately 150 people to assist with diverting the water. A human chain formed and with the use of sandbags, the flow was lessened and the woman was removed to safety after more than an hour of being submerged in below 40 degree water Both rangers were suffering from exhaustion and shock from the cold water when the rescue was completed.

Geoffrey L. Holmes

Licensing Registration Examiner

Department of Motor Vehicles

3/2/2011

Special Service Award (Silver)

On Wednesday, March 2, 2011, at approximately 12 15 p m , 911 operators received over 20 different ca s about a man causing a disturbance in the Hawthorne DMV. Manager I Conrad Rivarde, asked him to leave Instead, the man jumped on the ledge of a workstation saying "they are going to kill me!" Mr Rivarde approached the man and demanded he get down A thou gh the man initially complied, within seconds he jumped back on the ledge and fell backwards into the work area, got up and started running Mr Rivarde caught up with him and grabbed him The man appeared disorientated and paranoid He escaped and starting running towards the rear of the work area, looking behind him as if someone was chasing him. The man grabbed a female manager and held her in front of him ike a shield and then shoved her away In an effort to apprehend the man, Mr Rivarde tack ed him and they struggled on the floor The man struck Mr. Rivarde in the face and escaped. At this moment Manager I Kathy Myles intervened by grabbing the man and telling him to calm down while advising staff to clear the area. Licensing Registration Examiner Geoffrey Ho mes was returning back to the office after administering a driving exam and was informed about the situation Mr Ho mes ran into the building, saw Ms. Myles struggling with the man, and approached to assist with the situation. Realizing they were in close proximity to a stockroom, Ms My es, Mr Rivarde, Mr. Holmes and a security guard put the man inside the stockroom and together they restrained him until police arrived. The man was arrested and found to be under the influence of narcotics.

Elliot Hopkins

Fire Apparatus Engineer

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

11/18/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)

On November 8, 2018, the Camp Fire started above the community of Pulga and was the deadliest, most destructive fire in California history. California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Jeff Edson and Fire Apparatus Engineer Elliot Hopkins were on duty at Jarbo Gap. As they made their way to the intersection of Concow Road and Hoffman Road, spot fires were beginning to establish around the area. They decided to go down Hoffman Road to alert and evacuate residents, using the truck's public announcement system to advise residents to evacuate and pulling into driveways to encourage residents to leave. Spot fires were now established across Concow Lake and below Sawmill Lookout as Captain Edson and Engineer Hopkins reached the last house on Hoffman Road and realized they should head back out. As they traveled back down Hoffman Road, they encountered an injured woman standing in the road. They placed her in the back seat of the truck and continued on. The numerous spot fires had grown together by this time and the winds were intense. The fire was burning along both sides of Hoffman Road and the smoke was so thick that it completely obscured the road, forcing them to rely on the GPS system to navigate through the smoke. As they reached a creek crossing, four men warned that the road ahead was blocked and there was no way out. Cars started to back up behind their truck. Captain Edson realized that they needed to take advantage of the creek as a temporary refuge. Captain Edson and Engineer Hopkins worked to gather as many people as they could and escorted get them into the creek. As the fire grew more intense, Engineer Hopkins made one last trip up the line of cars, using both his own and Captain Edson's fire shelters to shield people from the extreme heat as he brought them back to the shelter of the creek. While dozens of individuals took temporary shelter in the creek, Captain Edson returned to the truck and coordinated by radio with a bulldozer to clear Hoffman Road. With the bulldozer working to clear the road, Captain Edson and Engineer Hopkins began getting people out of the creek and into any vehicle that would still run, cramming as many pets and people as they could into each vehicle. The fire was so intense that some of the vehicles caught fire as they began driving out. Captain Edson and Engineer Hopkins were the last to leave the creek. Arriving at the safety area being built by the bulldozer, they realized it was not big enough and chose to escort the survivors to a safer location. Once the survivors' safety was ensured, Captain Edson and Engineer Hopkins returned to the fire line, where they assisted with the rescue of a civilian with severe burn injuries. With no regard for his own safety, Engineer Hopkins went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Engineer Elliot Hopkins.

Michael Houser

Investigator

Alcohol Beverage Control

8/1/2003

Special Service Award (Silver)

At 9 30 p m whi e on assignment, ABC Investigators David Raymond and Michael Houser observed a young man ask two adults males to purchase beer for him from a oca store Following the purchase, the young man entered the adults' vehicle and they drove away from the premises to transfer the beer. At one point, the minor attempted to exit he vehicle but was prevented from doing so by one of the adults, who began to choke him from behind. The vehicle fled the scene with they youth still struggling to escape and with the two ABC investigators now in pursuit. The investigators were able to initiate a vehicle stop and arrest the two adults for kidnapping, providing alcohol to a minor, attempted robbery and battery. The investigators recognition of the situation and their quick response resulted in a safe re ease of the young man. No one was injured.

Gregory Houser, Jr.

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/27/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)

On February 27, 2009, California Highway Patrol Officer Gregory Houser, Jr. arrived on the scene of a suicide attempt. He found a distraught man clinging to the Martin Luther King Jr. Way overpass above the traffic on State Route-99 in the City of Merced. Without hesitation or fear for his own safety, Officer Houser grabbed the man. Officer Houser maintained his grasp on the man's arms until Merced County Sheriff Mark Pazin arrived on scene. Sheriff Pazin held on to the subject's left arm to assist in keeping the distressed man from falling onto the freeway below. Both Officer Houser and Sheriff Pazin attempted to pull the man back up onto the freeway overpass, but were unsuccessful. After maintaining their grip for some time, Officer Houser and Sheriff Pazin were no longer able to maintain their grip and lost hold of the man. The man fell approximately 10 feet into the bed of a dump truck which had been positioned underneath him in case of a possible fall. Merced Fire Department and ambulance personnel were on-scene and immediately transported the man to Doctors Hospital in Modesto. The actions of Officer Houser, without regard for his own safety, prevented major injuries or death to the distraught man.

Alton Hoxie

Chief Security Officer

Department of Mental Hygiene

8/12/1968

Special Act Award (Gold)

Chief Security Officer Alton Hoxie, Frank Brignoli, Assistant Superintendent of Nursing Services and Dr. Allen F. Hendy were at the Patton psychiatric hospital when a gunman, a former patient, arrived with a hostage at the hospital's admission office at noon. He had come back to Patton "desperate to seek and help and a doctor". The gunman had already shot his wife and then forced a fellow employee he took as hostage to drive him to a bar in Cucamonga where he shot a family friend. Mr. Hoxie, Mr. Brignoli and Dr. Hendy talked steadily to the ex-patient who was pressing a gun to the hostage's head. The three eventually quieted the gunman who released the hostage. They continued to talk to the man, "You've shot enough people." Mr. Brignoli told the gunman, "If you want help, then give up the gun." The man then gave up the gun and surrendered to police.

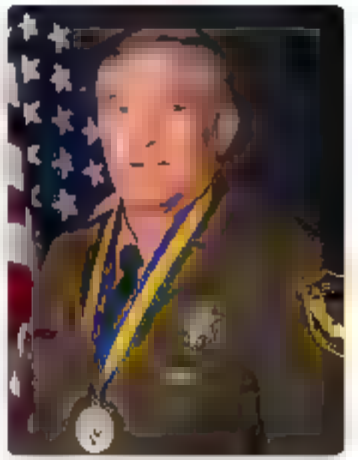
Doug Huckins

Patrol Lieutenant

Department of Fish and Wildlife

2/10/1996

Special Service Award (Silver)



On February 10, 1996, at approximately 12:30 p m., Patrol Lieutenant Doug Huckins, Wardens Gary Combes and John Ewald, and a U. S. Coast Guard Petty Officer were patrolling the waters off the Santa Cruz coastline in their patrol boat "Bluefin", when they overheard a radio call describing a capsized boat approximately two and a half miles from their location. Multiple victims were reported to be in the water. Within 15 minutes the crew arrived to find an overturned boat in the surf line. Several people were in the frigid water, including two surfers who paddled out to assist the victims. The crew could see the surfers taking turns holding up four of the five victims. Despite being tossed around by waves as high as 12 feet, Lieutenant Huckins backed the Bluefin just off the surf line within a quarter mile of the beach. Wardens Combes and Ewald launched a rigid hull inflatable skiff and maneuvered into the surf-zone, riding the backs of the dangerous swells. Within minutes they rescued three of the exhausted victims from the 50-degree water and rushed them back to the Bluefin where they were given warm clothing as all were in advanced stages of hypothermia. The victims were airlifted from the patrol boat to a nearby hospital. Meanwhile, the two surfers managed to get another victim to shore, but sadly, the fifth victim drowned

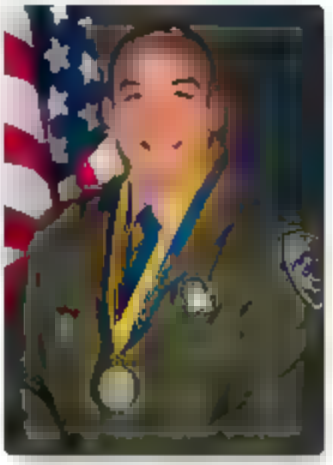
Jason Hughes

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/26/2016

Special Service Award (Silver)



On Apri 26, 2016, at 9:19 p.m. Officer Jason Hughes was on patrol with his partner, Officer Kerry Comphe , when they responded to a woman sitting with her egs hanging over the railing of an overpass bridge As the officers approached the woman, she stood up on top of the bridge railing, so they stopped their approach and engaged her in conversation. The officers were able to convince the woman to step down from the rai ing. They slowly moved closer to her whi e asking her to move away from the railing, but she backed away from them and began looking over the edge. Officer Hughes and his partner determined that the woman intended to jump and quickly coordinated a plan to stop her The officers rushed towards her just as she jumped head first over the railing As her body cleared the bridge rai ing, Officer Hughes grabbed onto her sweater and arm while Officer Comphe grabbed her other arm. The woman actively fought against the officers and ye ed at them to let her go. Officers Hughes and Comphel struggled to bring her back over the railing as she hooked her feet to a freeway sign. Although both officers were at great risk of being pu ed over the three foot high railing, they refused to et go as she dangled precariously above the road and vehicular traffic be ow Once additional backup arrived, everyone helped to bring the woman back over the bridge railing.

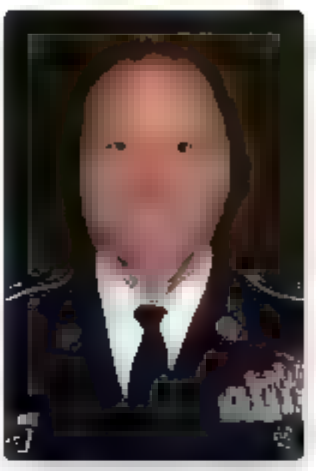
Kelly Hughes

Sergeant First Class

California Army National Guard

6/26/2008

Special Service Award (Silver)



At approximately 8 30 pm on June 26, 2008, Army National Guard personnel were preparing to conduct a short, Night Vision Goggle helicopter training mission in the Sacramento vicinity, when the call came in requesting support in a 10 000 foot rescue mission in the John Muir Wilderness. Earlier that day, a Boy Scout troop was crossing a stream in the remote Wilson Lake area of eastern Fresno County, when a 10 ton boulder rolled and trapped a fourteen-year-old boy's leg between it and another boulder Most of the crew assembled by Officer Weatherhead for the planned short training mission had already been on duty almost 12 hours. This mission would be challenging because the altitude for the rescue was at 10,000 feet which provided a reduced power capability, smoke from a nearby fire restricted visibility, the crew was starting the mission at a time they would normally be going home, and the darkness required use of Night Vision Goggles. In spite of all of this, the crew agreed to the mission and immediately began planning. The helicopter crew departed Mather at 10:10 pm and arrived at the Fresno airport at 11 20 pm where they picked up a CAL FIRE rescue employee and equipment. At 12 35 am, the crew departed Fresno under Night Vision Goggles. They located the victim, conducted a recon of the landing zone and landed at approximately 1:15 am While Officer Weatherhead stayed with the aircraft, the remainder of the crew, carrying the rescue equipment and using only head lamps and compasses, set out under total darkness through treacherously steep rocky terrain to find the Boy Scout After nearly three hours of rescue efforts, they were able to move the 10 ton boulder enough to free the boy's leg They administered medical aid and carried the boy for more than an hour back to the helicopter. After being awake for 24 hours, the crew arrived at the Fresno airport at approximately 6:10 am and the Boy Scout was then transported to the hospital. The crew's actions, without regard for their personal safety, saved this young boy's life The State of California takes great pride in presenting Chief Warrant Officer Three Randall Weatherhead, Chief Warrant Officer Two Cole Gould, Sergeant First Class Kelly Hughes, and Staff Sergeant Rob Walters, these Silver Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Daniel Humble

Investigative Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/4/1996

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 4, 1996, at 2:00 p.m. Officer Humble completed his shift and was traveling westbound on Antelope Road. Officer Humble pulled off the road in response to a stopped vehicle and saw an AMC Hornet partially submerged in the creek and the passenger compartment rapidly filling with water. The vehicle started to float downstream, but stopped when it forced up against a large oak tree. Due to the depth of the water in the vehicle and the glare on the windows, Officer Humble was unable to tell how many persons were in the vehicle. He placed himself in danger by climbing on the roof of the Hornet to assess the situation. The occupants of the vehicle were the driver and one passenger, an elderly woman with Alzheimer's. Russell Clayton, a correctional officer, also stopped at the scene. He entered the creek and requested the keys from the driver so both officers could evacuate the vehicle's occupants utilizing the rear hatchback. The vehicle's front doors could not be opened due to the depth and force of the raging water and the damage sustained in the initial collision. The driver finally gave the keys to Officer Humble. The hatchback was opened, and both officers entered the vehicle from the rear. Officer Clayton pulled the driver out the seat and handed her to Officer Humble, who removed her form the vehicle. She was pulled to safety by bystanders. The elderly passenger was now in shoulder deep water an mumbling incoherently. She panicked and would not release the steering wheel or the door handle. As the water continued to enter the vehicle, the officers were able to break her grip. Officer Clayton pulled her over the front seat, and Officer Humble pulled her out through the hatchback and, with the assistance of bystanders, onto the bank. Being a plain clothes investigator, Officer Humble did not have any special safety equipment with him at the time of rescue. Both officers were persistent in their struggle to remove a resistant Alzheimer's patient from a submerging vehicle. Knowing his duty as a sworn peace officer and moral obligation to protect life, Officer Humble placed himself in danger above the normal course of duty by entering the practically submerged vehicle to save the two women from drowning. In what could have been a tragic accident, Officer Humble and Officer Clayton ultimately saved both driver and passenger.

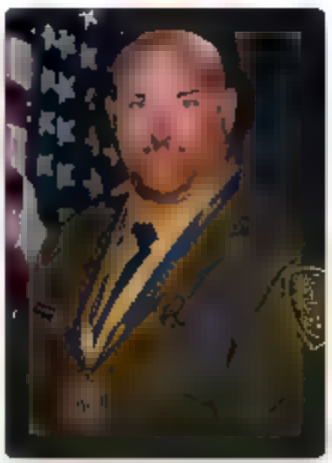
Michael Humphrey

Correctional Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

5/24/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)



On May 24, 2017 at 10:20 a.m., in the Pelican Bay State Prison outdoor exercise yard, holding approximately three hundred inmates, a one-on-one fight started. Correctional officers responded to the fight to stop the incident. While responding staff were attempting to quell the incident, approximately 130 inmates began rushing and attacking the officers. As Officer Michael Humphrey was responding to the incident he radioed Central Control for a Code 3 response. As inmates rushed towards Officer Humphrey, he utilized force to stop the attack. Once the advancing inmates were secured in restraints, Officer Humphrey continued to advance towards his fellow officers who were being overwhelmed by inmates. Officer Humphrey witnessed an officer being knocked to the ground and inmates kicking him in the head, knocking him unconscious. As Officer Humphrey was advancing towards this officer, he was cut off by more advancing aggressive inmates. At one point, one inmate with a state-issued baton that was taken from another officer, advanced towards Officer Humphrey and his partner. Officer Humphrey utilized his baton to stop the attack. Moments later, responding staff arrived and all inmates stopped their attack. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Humphrey's heroic act saved the lives of fellow officers and inmates in the face of a large prison fight. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctional Officer Michael Humphrey.

Stephen Hunsaker

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/26/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 26, 2007, at approximately 2:30 p.m., employees of Scaled Composites, an aerospace development company at Mojave Air and Space Port, were working near two large tanks of nitrous oxide gas when one of the carbon fiber tanks exploded. CHP Sergeants Jeffrey Baird and Mark McCormack along with Officers Jack Borne, Jesse Borne, Stephen Hunsaker, Byron Jobe, Jeffrey Nousch and Roberta Record responded to the scene. The toxic gas fumes and carbon fiber particles from the explosion posed a respiratory hazard. The second tank, which contained 10 000 pounds of nitrous oxide gas, was also damaged and in danger of exploding. Because of the significant hazard and seriousness of the victims' injuries, the first responders could not wait for a hazardous material team, so CHP personnel entered and rendered aid to the victims. They helped place two victims onto backboards, and carried them to a waiting life flight helicopter; two other victims were placed in ambulances and triaged at a safe zone. CHP personnel remained on site evacuating the remaining Mojave Air and Space Port employees to a safe area. Due to the heroic efforts of these men and women, three of the four victims were successfully rescued and lived.

Max Hunter

Lifeguard I

Department of Parks and Recreation

1/21/2023

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the evening of Saturday, January 21, 2023, lifeguards Max Hunter and Riley Rhodes were 10 minutes away from clocking out for the day when they received reports of a lost swimmer off Pop ar Beach in Half Moon Bay. With a minus tide in fu effect, the lifeguards quickly arrived on the scene and from a cliff were able to catch a glimpse of the distressed individual about 300 yards out. Donned with their wetsuits, fins and rescue buoys, the lifeguards entered the water as the light was quickly fading. For the next 20 minutes, they swam through large swells more than 8 feet high and navigated shallow sandbars, deep holes and unrelenting surf to reach the spot where they hoped they would find the victim. But as they cleared the breaking waves, they realized they had lost sight of the swimmer over the swell lines. Ensuring they stayed together, the lifeguards began to urgently call out and heard the man screaming for help moments later. Guided by the victim's cries, they finally reached him, roughly 500 yards from shore. Pummeled by waves, the lifeguards provided the victim with a floatation device. Due to the extremely hazardous conditions and darkness, the units on shore had lost sight of all parties and repeatedly attempted to call the lifeguards back. Believing that the local harbor patrol had seen them, the lifeguards tried to swim the victim to the patrol vessel since they were much closer to the boat than the beach. However, after towing for several minutes, they realized that the patrol boat had not seen them, and the vessel was moving away. During this time, a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter arrived overhead and immediately began flying a search pattern to find them with no success. Lifeguards Hunter and Rhodes ultimately decided they had to swim to shore, towing the victim in a rescue buoy in complete darkness, while navigating the increasingly dangerous conditions. After being in the water for nearly an hour while navigating large winter surfs and rip currents, the two eventually towed the exhausted survivor ashore near Redondo Beach, almost a mile from where they had first entered the water. For the other first responders on the beach, seeing the lifeguards emerge with the rescued individual was truly wondrous. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Parks and Recreation, Lifeguard I Max Hunter for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Harvey Robert Huss

Maintenance Man

Department of Transportation

2/11/1973

Special Act Award (Gold)

On February 11, 1973, at 5 a m , a man came to the door of the Big Sur Maintenance Station and Mr. Ralph Dengates, the Maintenance Foreman, answered it. The man said there was an emergency about five miles south of the station, a car with people inside was stuck in a mudslide and the vehicle was being pushed over the side. Mr. Dengates called Mr. Harvey Robert Huss and asked him if he would go with him to assist the motorists. Mr Huss did not hesitate and they left immediately Mr Huss drove a skip loader and Mr. Dengates followed him in a truck. On the way down, the truck got a flat tire and Mr. Huss continued alone in the dark. When Mr. Dengates arrived at the site later he saw the road had completely washed away and only the top of Mr. Huss's loader was visible above the debris that had come down to rest 300 feet below the road Later it was reported that the car in danger had been able to get out without loss of life Mr Huss did not survive He was posthumously awarded a gold Medal of Valor for giving all he had to give to help people he thought were in danger.

Shawn Daniel Hussey

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

6/18/2008

Special Service Award (Silver)

On June 18, 2008, at approximately 3:30 a.m., California Department of Transportation employees Shawn Daniel Hussey and Alan L. Companey responded to a call about a vehicle that had stopped on the Bay Bridge in a westbound lane just east of Treasure Island. Upon arrival, Mr. Hussey saw the car was empty and found a suicidal man had climbed over the bridge railing and was standing on a girder approximately 225 feet above the bay with a bag of rocks tied to one wrist. Mr. Hussey immediately requested assistance from the CHP. He then engaged the man in conversation until the CHP and additional support arrived, including the San Francisco Police Department's trained negotiator, water responders, ambulance, paramedics, and the United States Coast Guard. Mr. Companey and Mr. Hussey discussed rescue options and called for fall protection equipment to be delivered in case it was needed. Mr. Companey brought this equipment to the scene. The negotiator and allied team worked for two hours and eventually calmed the distraught man down enough to allow Mr. Hussey and Mr. Companey to climb over the rail. Mr. Hussey immediately grabbed the man, boosted him into Mr. Companey's arms and up into the hands of the negotiator and CHP Officers. Their actions helped save the life of the distraught man.

Benny Hyden

Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/25/1981

Special Act Award (Gold)

Officer Benny Hyden was relaxing off duty at home when a neighbor informed him of a serious auto accident in the neighborhood. Officer Hyden te ephone the CHP dispatch center before running to the accident scene. He saw a wrecked pickup truck on fire, the flames fed by a ruptured natural gas line,. As the flames shot 20 feet over the truck, Officer Hyden pulled the passenger form the vehicle. He then re-entered the truck cab and after an extensive effort, unpinned the driver's legs and moved him to safety

Robert L. Immoos

Caltrans Highway Maintenance Lead Worker

Department of Transportation

4/8/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 6 50 p.m., on April 8, 2008, Ca ifornia Department of Transportation employee Robert L Immoos was at the eastbound Castle Peak off-ramp on Interstate 80 near Donner Summit, watching traffic and weather conditions Mr Immoos was monitoring the CB radio and heard truckers ta king about a wrong-way driver near the Castle Peak area Mr Immoos drove up the east bound on-ramp and saw the wrong-way driver going west in the #1 ane from Cast e Peak. At this time, Teichert Construction had been working in the area and had begun to do a lane shift. Two lanes were closed, so traffic was travelling in two temporary anes Mr Immoos turned around and started heading west in the east bound c osed lanes.

As Mr Immoos approached the wrong-way driver, he could see that oncoming traffic was swerving to avoid head-on co isions Mr Immoos cou d not get the attention of the wrong-way driver, so he decided that at the next traffic break he wou d turn into oncoming traffic in front of the wrong-way driver With his head ights and warning lights on, Mr. Immoos drove his pickup truck into the on-coming anes in front of the wrong-way driver. While trying to get the wrong-way driver to s ow down, Mr Immoos had to avoid several on-coming vehicles. Mr. Immoos turned on his directional indicator and motioned to the wrong-way driver. At the next traffic break, both he and the wrong-way driver made it across the lanes of traffic and into the c osed coned-off lanes Mr Immoos then had the driver turn around and follow him back to the Castle Peak Interchange where they met up with CHP Officer James M Hardy. The wrong-way driver was cleared by the CHP officer and was directed back onto the freeway going the right way this time. Without a thought for his personal safety, Mr Immoos prevented a potentially serious head-on collision, potential loss of life and possible multi-car collisions.

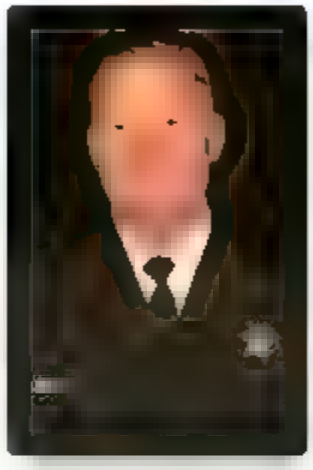
Rhett Imperiale

Forester I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/25/2010

Special Service Award (Silver)



On July 25th, 2010, CAL FIRE employee Rhett Imperiale was on fire prevention patrol on Highway 96 near the town of Willow Creek, when he noticed fresh skid marks on the turnout. Not seeing a vehicle, he contacted other patrol units for information on past accidents in the area. With no known past accidents, Rhett was concerned there might be a car out of sight over the edge. US Forest Service Officer Bob Phillips responded and the two descended the treacherous slope. They located a vehicle with two seriously injured victims approximately 200 feet below the roadway. The vehicle was upside down on the steep slope, leaking fuel and had one victim still trapped inside. Together they removed the victim from the vehicle, moved both victims to a safe place away from the fuel, and administered first aid until additional help arrived. CAL FIRE employees Kurt McCray, Len Nielson, and Mark Rodgers arrived on scene and scaled down the steep rocky slope to provide assistance. With the help of personnel from other law enforcement and fire agencies, it took approximately two hours to secure the victims, move them up to the highway, and transport them to medical care. The rescue was extremely hazardous due to the steepness of the slope, falling rocks, leaking fuel, and high air temperatures. Rescue personnel had to deflect numerous rocks with their hands and arms to protect the victims and other rescue personnel. The rescue team's actions, without regard for their own safety, saved these two accident victims. The State of California takes great pride in presenting Mark Rodgers, Rhett Imperiale, Kurt McCray, and Len Nielson, these Silver Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call or duty or service

Frank Inacio

Officer

Department of Justice

4/12/2012

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On April 12, 2012, responding to reports of shots fired and officers down, Officer Frank Inacio, along with ten other officers of the Modesto police department, arrived on scene to find Stanislaus County Sheriff's Deputy Bob Paris and civilian locksmith Gendon Engert lying unconscious outside the front door leading to the suspect's apartment front door. Armed with an arsenal, the suspect had barricaded himself inside his apartment and exchanging fire with a second deputy, Deputy Mike Glinskas, who was pinned down and had issued the call for help. Placing ballistic shields across the front passenger window of a Modesto police car, a group of officers took cover on the driver's side and used the vehicle as mobile cover to advance on the apartment while the remaining officers deployed a flash bang diversionary device. Their coordinated efforts were successful in that they were able to extract Glinskas and escort him to safety and medical attention. They were also able to recover Paris and Engert, both of whom had unfortunately been mortally wounded.

After an eleven hour standoff, the suspect took his own life. Because of actions of Officer Inacio and his fellow officers, prevented the deadly standoff from escalating further and thereby threatening more lives.

Julian Irigoyen

Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/2/2005

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Julian Irigoyen, on January 2, 2005 performed an act of heroism at risk to his personal safety by rescuing two females from drowning in a swift moving canal. Officer Irigoyen of the Bakersfield Area was riding his Departmental-issue motorcycle when he was summoned by an unidentified citizen who reported two females drowning in a nearby canal. Thereafter Officer Irigoyen proceeded down the canal bank towards the victims. As he reached their location, he observed a second citizen, lying on his stomach, stretched across a foot bridge and holding onto the arms of two females, one adult, one child. Both were in the water and struggling to stay afloat. The adult victim was exhausted and struggling to hold onto the citizen. Knowing they had very little time to perform the rescue, Officer Irigoyen slid down the adjacent embankment to a small concrete edge. The ledge was approximately five inches in width, and positioned four feet above the water line. The depth of the water in the canal at the time of the incident was approximately ten feet. The sides of the canal were slippery and covered with moss, prohibiting adequate footing or support to attempt a rescue from the canal bank. This position placed Officer Irigoyen in extreme risk of falling into the swift water of the canal. The citizen on the footbridge handed off the child to Officer Irigoyen. Officer Irigoyen subsequently pulled her to safety. Exhausted and finding it difficult to balance himself on the narrow ledge, Officer Irgoyen held onto the adult woman victim until the citizen could reposition himself and assist with pulling her to safety. The adult woman and her daughter had been in the water for approximately five minutes. Both were exhausted and suffering from hypothermia

Harold S. Jacob

Corrections Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

9/25/1960

Special Act Award (Gold)

In July 1960, Correctional Officer Harold S. Jacob saved an entire crew of inmate firefighters during a fire at Wefferling Campsite Number 2. Correctional Officer Jacob and his inmate crew were completely surrounded by fire moving in the direction of their campsite. Realizing no exit was available and a campsite burn-through was inevitable, Correctional Officer Jacob ordered the men to wet down their bodies as much as possible and station themselves in a circle, some prone, some in a hands and knees position. In this manner, Correctional Officer Jacob and his crew fought the fire as it swept through them and prevented any personal injury to the crew.

Johnnie James

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

10/5/2011

Special Service Award (Silver)

On October 5, 2011, at approximately 3:00 p.m., Caltrans Equipment Operator II's, Jerry Bachmann and Johnnie James were driving on remote Highway 199 when they noticed a downed culvert marker and fresh tire tracks leaving the roadway. Mr. James looked in the rear view mirror and saw an upside-down vehicle resting precariously against a tree over a steep bank leading down to the Smith River. They went down to check out the situation. The occupants were an elderly couple, both injured but conscious. The man was half in/half out of the passenger side window, held only by his seatbelt. He had massive head injuries and was having difficulty breathing. The female driver was inside of the flipped vehicle, feet on the door and leaning against the inside roof. She had a broken wrist. Mr. James pulled the woman out of the car and placed her on the bank while Mr. Bachmann covered her with his coat. With great difficulty, Mr. James freed the man from his seatbelt. As emergency responders arrived, large, loose rocks started rolling down on them. Mr. Bachmann used his body and a fire dept. hat to protect the woman from the falling rocks. At one point he was holding the woman with one hand, a tree with the other, and an emergency responder was standing on his leg to balance him. Mr. Bachmann assisted the injured man into the rescue basket; unfortunately, the man suffered a heart attack as they were pulling him up and passed away later that night. The woman fully recovered.

Ronald James

State Radio Technician

Department of General Services

3/18/1968

Special Act Award (Gold)

Contractors were installing a sewer line in the area of the Sunnymead Fire Station in Riverside County. The Fire station was staffed with Fire Captain George McGuire, Fire Captain Delbert Tate and DGS State Radio Technician Ronald James were on site also for other business, when they were alerted that a cave-in had occurred at the construction site. Mr. James, along with the Fire Captains answered the call. Two men had been working at the bottom of a 13 foot deep trench when the bank gave way and completely buried them. The rescuers succeeded in uncovering one man's head, but loose dirt was falling into the trench. Captain McGuire placed himself between the victims and the sliding dirt and was quickly buried to his waist. Captain Tate was buried to his knees. Despite this setback, Mr. James, along with the Fire Captains continued their rescue operations and managed to uncover and revived the two buried men.

Jeffrey Jensen

Los Angeles Police Department, Officer

Other

10/16/2005

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On October 16, 2005, Officers Jeffrey Jensen and Paul Waymire of the Los Angeles Police Department observed billows of black smoke coming from a car accident site in Los Angeles. Upon approach, they observed two good Samaritans attempting to extinguish a vehicle fire and extract the victim from the wreckage. Without fear for their own lives, they rushed to help the victim of the burning vehicle. With the fire intensifying and time becoming critical, the officers took charge, fought back the fire and removed the victim from the burning vehicle, which subsequently ignited and exploded in flames

Philo Jewett

Fish Hatchery Manager

Department of Fish and Wildlife

1/2/1971

Special Act Award (Gold)

Fish Hatchery Manager Philo Jewett, Fish Culturist John Sparks and Fish and Game Warden Kenneth Cooper saved a boating accident victim who was floundering in the freezing waters of the Comanche Reservoir

Byron Jobe

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/26/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 26, 2007, at approximately 2:30 p.m., employees of Scaled Composites, an aerospace development company at Mojave Air and Space Port, were working near two large tanks of nitrous oxide gas when one of the carbon fiber tanks exploded. CHP Sergeants Jeffrey Baird and Mark McCormack along with Officers Jack Borne, Jesse Borne, Stephen Hunsaker, Byron Jobe, Jeffrey Nousch and Roberta Record responded to the scene. The toxic gas fumes and carbon fiber particles from the explosion posed a respiratory hazard. The second tank, which contained 10,000 pounds of nitrous oxide gas, was also damaged and in danger of exploding. Because of the significant hazard and seriousness of the victims' injuries, the first responders could not wait for a hazardous material team, so CHP personnel entered and rendered aid to the victims. They helped place two victims onto backboards, and carried them to a waiting life flight helicopter; two other victims were placed in ambulances and triaged at a safe zone. CHP personnel remained on site evacuating the remaining Mojave Air and Space Port employees to a safe area. Due to the heroic efforts of these men and women, three of the four victims were successfully rescued and lived.

Franklin T. Johnson

Fire Fighter I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/2/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On February 2, 2008, at approximately 1 p.m., Firefighter I Franklin T Johnson and Fire Apparatus Engineer James F Allen were dispatched to a fire in a mobile home park in the community of Delhi. Upon arrival, they saw the fire was well established, involving 75% of the mobile home and venting through the roof. Family members reported that a child was still inside the home in a bedroom. Both men put on their breathing masks, grabbed a fire hose line and entered the home through the front door Once inside, they encountered heavy fire and falling debris from the collapsing roof. They searched for a doorway along the adjoining living room wall with no success and were unable to progress to the rear of the home due to the flames. Engineer Allen noticed that the fire had weakened the interior living room wall and began pushing on it. His effort created an access point to the adjoining bedroom. Looking into the bedroom, he saw the fire beginning to burn through the top of the closed bedroom door and starting to flash over the ceiling He directed his hose stream to the top of the door area knocking down the flames Firefighter Johnson entered the bedroom and found a 12-year old boy lying face down. Together they picked the boy up and passed him through a small bedroom window to a paramedic and bystander who were in front of the home Firefighter Johnson and Engineer Allen's actions during this rescue were responsible for saving the life of this young boy

Mark E. Johnson

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

6/22/2015

Special Service Award (Silver)

On June 22, 2015, at approximately 9:53 a.m., California Department of Transportation Equipment Operator II Mark E. Johnson was driving a skip loader tractor along the Antelope Valley Freeway near Agua Dulce when he felt a strong jolt from the back of his tractor and realized he had just been rear-ended. Mr. Johnson shut his vehicle down and when he turned to assess the impact, he saw the car that hit him was on fire and filled with black smoke. The driver was struggling to escape the burning vehicle, but the car was badly damaged and the door was jammed. Without hesitation, Mr. Johnson ran to the flaming car and pried the door open with his bare hands. He then led the dazed driver, a pregnant woman who had fallen asleep at the wheel, away from the burning vehicle. After confirming she was safe, Mr. Johnson turned his attention to the grass fire started by the flame-engulfed car. Using a shovel, he started to extinguish the fire before additional emergency personnel arrived. Both Mr. Johnson and the driver were transported to the hospital for observation.

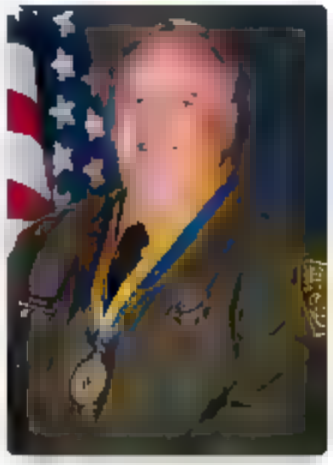
Mike R. Johnson

Correctional Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

2/1/2015

Special Act Award (Gold)



On February 1, 2015, at 10:26 a.m., Correctional Officer Mike Johnson was on his way home from work when he came across a two-car crash that left one vehicle on fire. Officer Johnson and a Marina police officer rescued a woman from the burning vehicle by carrying her to safety just before the vehicle became fully engulfed in flames. Officer Johnson also moved another victim, who was on the ground nearby, to safety. Both victims survived and are recovering. Officer Johnson suffered burns but did not seek medical attention. The Marina Police Department stated Officer Johnson "really did an outstanding job. [His] actions were commendable and did not go unnoticed." The victims' family was left financially strapped to pay for medical bills. Officer Johnson is helping the victims' family raise money for their medical care.

Paul V. Johnson

Highway Maintenance Technician

Department of Transportation

5/30/1967

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 30, 1967 Paul V. Johnson, a Los Angeles Highway Maintenance technician risked his personal safety and endangered his very life when he lowered himself down a snowy cliff to reach a 12-year-old boy who had fallen more than 1,000 feet. During the rescue attempt, Mr. Johnson fell 40 feet onto rocks during his descent down the cliff and sustained major injuries himself, with ten fractured ribs and a punctured lung, but he still continued on to reach the boy and give him comfort until help arrived.

Mark Johnston

San Diego Sheriff, Deputy

Other

10/26/2003

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

October 26, 2003, Deputies Mark Johnston and Mario Tano put their lives and personal safety on the line for the citizens that we are commissioned to serve. They went back into heavy fire and choking smoke to check on and rescue people and animals that otherwise may have perished in this fire. After successfully escaping this blaze themselves these Deputies went on helping burn victims and assisted with investigating the deaths that occurred in the Barona Reservation area on October 26th.

William Johnston

Long Beach Police Department

Other

5/30/2002

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

Officer Milovich was the first to arrive on scene and was immediately met by hysterical citizens, who were pleading for him to help them, advising him that there was a man inside the store shooting innocent victims. At this time, Community Policing Officers W Johnston, and C. Crawford assisted Officer Milovich. The Three of them formed an Emergency Action Team (EAT) and without hesitation or regard for their own safety, entered the store. The officers had limited information as to the suspect's description and were immediately confronted by numerous victims, who were frantically trying to leave the store. The officers showed great restraint with these people, not knowing if one of them was possibly the suspect.

James D. Jones

Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

12/3/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 3, 2003, Fish and Game Warden James Jones was on patrol in Cordelia, California. At approximately 7 p.m., he heard, over his radio, that a CHP motorcycle officer was in pursuit of a suspect who would not yield to his lights and siren. Knowing that the pursuit was headed directly toward him, Warden Jones joined the pursuit as it passed his location. During the chase, the suspect hit another vehicle and continued to flee. Sometime later, the suspect pulled to the side of the road. As the CHP Officer pulled his motorcycle in behind the suspect, the suspect put the vehicle in reverse in an attempt to hit the officer. Shots were fired by the CHP officer and the suspect fled continuing to evade arrest. Since the CHP officer was on a motorcycle, and was more vulnerable to a collision, Warden Jones joined the pursuit. The suspect drove down a dead end county lane and stopped in a long private driveway. As the suspect attempted to turn the vehicle around, Warden Jones positioned his vehicle to block the escape. As Warden Jones and the CHP officer approached the suspect's vehicle, the suspect again attempted to flee and drove the vehicle directly towards the CHP officer. Warden Jones ordered the suspect to stop but the suspect failed to comply. Warden Jones fired two rounds hitting the suspect in the upper arm which caused the suspect to finally stop. Warden Jones' ability to quickly assess the situation resulted in his taking action that saved the CHP officer from injury or death. Without hesitation, Warden Jones inserted himself into a potentially deadly scenario while providing assistance to an allied agency, helping to bring a dangerous situation under control.

Jeffrey A. Jones

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/4/1989

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 4, 1989, at approximately 9:48 pm, Officer Jeffrey A. Jones was on his routine patrol on Grapefruit Blvd. within the city limits of Coachella, when he noticed a large cloud of dust in the air several hundred feet ahead. Upon reaching the dust cloud, he observed a pickup truck about 85 feet south of the roadway resting on the railroad tracks. He immediately ran to the vehicle to investigate and found an injured, semiconscious man slumped in the driver's seat and bleeding profusely from a severe facial laceration. Officer Jones quickly retrieved his EMT kit from the patrol car and returned to administer first aid. As he was tending to the man's injuries, Officer Jones heard the warning bells at the nearby crossing and immediately looked to the north to see the gates closing and a train approaching rapidly. Realizing that he had only a few seconds before impact, Officer Jones tried to remove the injured man from the pickup. The man, who was not only dazed from his injuries but also intoxicated, began to resist any rescue attempt. Without consideration for his own safety, Officer Jones persisted and managed to grab the man's clothing and pull him to safety within approximately one second before impact as witnessed and reported by both the train's engineer and conductor. Both men rolled down an embakement adjacent to the tracks, landing within mere feet of the impact of the train upon the truck. Based on the force of the impact and the extent of the damage to the pickup, it is evident that the man would have been killed if not for actions of Officer Jones.

John D. Jones

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/25/1976

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 25, 1976, Officer John D. Jones was back on his beat in the Hayward CHP area after his dinner break when he saw a pall of black smoke rising ahead. He headed for the scene assuming it was a car fire. When he arrived on the scene he saw many onlookers watching a light plane burn. The plane had crashed nose-first and flames were quickly consuming the aircraft. One man was running back and forth from the flames trying to reach the pilot who was fully exposed because the roof of the cockpit had been knocked away. Officer Jones grabbed a fire extinguisher, ran to the plane, pointed the extinguisher and got only a useless phzzz. He turned to help the man who had run back in and was pulling at the pilot's shoulders. Jones took hold of the other and together they dislodged the pilot who was badly burned but still alive. Unfortunately the pilot died later; he had been in the burning plane for several minutes before Officer Jones arrived.

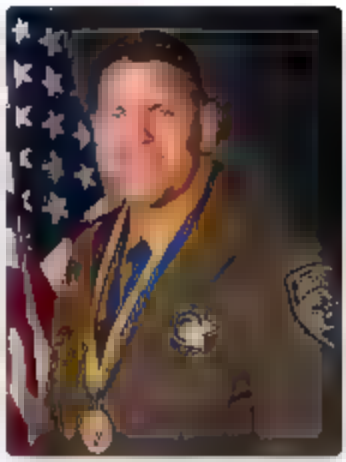
Wesley Jones

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/28/2013

Special Act Award (Gold)



On April 28, 2013 at approximately 2:15 p.m. California Highway Patrol Officer Wesley Jones responded to a traffic collision in Ventura County. A woman had driven her car off the freeway and down a steep embankment where it caught fire and ignited the surrounding brush. The woman was ejected. Several people stopped to assist, including a man who climbed down the embankment looking for the woman. Once he found her, he attempted to pull her away from the flames, but she resisted. When Officer Jones arrived on scene he heard voices but couldn't see anyone. He climbed down the embankment and eventually found the man and woman, surrounded by a growing brushfire. Officer Jones noticed a small opening in the flames and ran through just as the woman's car exploded, igniting even more brush. He grabbed the woman's arm and forcefully pulled her through the small opening, and with the man's assistance, carried her to a waiting officer. The man had become so extremely fatigued and disorientated from his strenuous rescue efforts he could no longer continue on his own, so Officer Jones assisted him until he reached safety.

Donald Jordan

Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

1/28/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Sergeant Donald Jordan, and Officer Eric Degraffenreid, on January 28, 2003, performed an act of heroism at great risk to their personal safety when they successfully rescued a citizen from a burning vehicle. At 8:40 p.m., Sergeant Jordan was conducting a ride-along with Officer Degraffenreid and monitored a radio-dispatch call regarding a traffic collision, caused by a horse running loose in freeway traffic lanes on Interstate 5 As Sergeant Jordan and Officer Degraffenreid responded to the area, they encountered another vehicle, which had struck the horse, veered across the southbound and northbound lanes, and had partially overturned in a ditch adjacent to the freeway. The vehicle, a 2002 Chevrolet Tahoe, was almost engulfed in flames as Sergeant Jordan and Officer Degraffenreid arrived at the scene Sergeant Jordan and Officer Degraffenreid encountered the passenger, Mr Cyrus Jenkins, staggering outside the vehicle injured and disoriented. He advised Sergeant Jordan and Officer Degraffenreid that his wife, Mrs. Earnie Jenkins, 67-years-old, was trapped in the burning vehicle. Both Sergeant Jordan and Officer Degraffenreid rushed to the burning vehicle without hesitation. As the flames spread throughout the engine and passenger compartment of the vehicle, the seriously injured, and disoriented female victim could not free herself from the driver's seat Due to the awkward angle of the vehicle, both employees were forced to expose their hands and forearms to the flames in order to free the victim. Both employees struggled to free the occupant as flames engulfed the passenger compartment and driver's seat area Both flame and harsh smoke greatly jeopardized the safety of both employees as they struggled to free the driver from the burning vehicle. Just prior to the point when rescue would have been impossible due to the rapidly encroaching flames, the employees managed to pull the victim out of the vehicle. A moment later, the vehicle exploded into flames and set a nearby building afire. Unquestionable, the actions of these brave employees saved Mrs. Jenkins' life The victim sustained moderate injuries as a result of the collision and credited the officers with saving her life Sergeant Jordan sustained minor burn and smoke injuries as a result of the rescue. The actions of Sergeant Jordan and Officer Degraffenreid were truly courageous and performed at great peril to their own lives "above and beyond the call of duty."

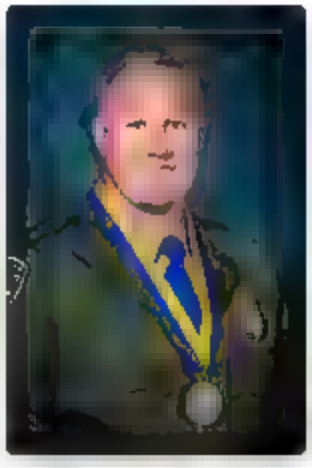
Eric Jorgensen

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/15/2021

Special Act Award (Gold)



On the night of August 15, 2021, at 11 35 p m , Officer Eric Jorgensen and his partner Officer Gustavo Rivalcaba were on detail in the vicinity of State Route 140, when they heard a loud traffic crash The officers immediately responded to the scene and found a truck on the shoulder of the road with major front-end damage and flames engulfing the engine compartment Officer Jorgensen swiftly exited his patrol vehicle, grabbed a fire extinguisher, and ran towards the truck For three minutes, Officer Jorgensen attempted to extinguish the flames while inhaling heavy smoke and extinguisher dust. As he attempted to extinguish the growing flames, he saw the male driver who appeared injured and trapped. Despite Officer Jorgensen using the entire contents of the fire extinguisher, the fire continued to grow. Meanwhile, Officer Rivalcaba attempted to open the driver side door using a prybar with no success. Realizing the flames were spreading to the inside of the truck, Officer Jorgensen entered through the passenger side door at great risk to himself and disregard for his own safety The male driver was pinned against the steering wheel, unable to get out on his own Officer Jorgensen reached across the seat and began pulling him towards the passenger door, attempting to dislodge him from under the steering wheel while the flames rapidly increased in size Officer Jorgensen successfully pulled the driver across the cab to the passenger door. A witness then assisted in pulling the driver completely out of the burning truck. Officer Jorgensen and the witness dragged him to a safe location and remained with him until a bystander, who was a nurse, stopped and rendered aid. The man suffered major injuries but survived the incident. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Eric Jorgensen for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

David W. Junette

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/26/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 26, 2004, Fire Captain David W. Junette and Pilot Thomas McConnel rescued three individuals from a downed Jet Ranger helicopter. The Jet Ranger helicopter was surveying the area to provide spot fire reports, when it clipped a tree line and crashed into an area threatened by a rapidly growing fire. The helicopter's three occupants were injured and trapped inside. Captain Junette and Pilot McConnel aided in slowing the fire by successfully dropping water around the perimeter, enabling ground support to prepare the injured occupants for evacuation. Because of their size, the medical helicopters were unable to maneuver and land near the crash site. Low on fuel and realizing time was of the essence, Captain Junette and Pilot McConnel skillfully piloted and placed their helicopter into a site so small that those on the ground thought it would not be able to land safely. Captain Junette and Pilot McConnel flew two of the injured occupants to the nearby medical helicopters, returned and repeated the same aerodynamic feat again for the third injured occupant. All three were then transported to the hospital.

David Kajiwara

Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/10/2005

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer David Kajiwara on January 10, 2005, performed an act of heroism at risk to his personal safety in the rescue attempts of numerous individuals trapped by a major landslide in the community of La Conchita. Officer Kajiwara became aware of a major landslide in the beach community of La Conchita. Officer Kajiwara, without hesitation and fully aware of the dangers of an additional landslide, responded on Ventura County Fire Unit 155 to Zelzah Avenue, arriving several minutes after the landslide occurred. Officer Kajiwara immediately became aware of additional extreme hazards in the area when he smelled natural gas and saw downed high voltage power lines. Additionally, timbers from the destroyed homes could be heard cracking and he could see mud flowing down Zelzah Avenue. Officer Kajiwara heard the screams of trapped women in the rubble of what appeared to be several collapsed residences, which were on top of each other. Realizing it would be some time before enough debris could be moved to reach the trapped women; Officer Kajiwara elected to allow the firemen to begin digging toward the women. Believing there might be additional persons trapped and ignoring the apparent danger, Officer Kajiwara searched the interiors of two badly damaged homes. Officer Kajiwara attempted to enter a third destroyed home, but it was too badly crushed to find an entry point. When he was satisfied there were no additional victims trapped, Officer Kajiwara returned to assist the firemen with the trapped women. Officer Kajiwara continued assisting Engine 1545 digging feverously with only his hands. After removing a great amount of dirt and debris, the rescuers were eventually successful in freeing one of the women. Officer Kajiwara continued his rescue attempts for the second woman until it appeared that the rescuers might cause the whole unstable building to fall on the trapped victim. The second woman was eventually rescued after heavy equipment and specialized urban search and rescue equipment arrived hours later. Officer Kajiwara remained on scene for several hours assisting until the arrival of trained rescue personnel allowed Officer Kajiwara to be replaced.

Brian Kammer

Heavy Equipment Operator

Department of Transportation

2/17/1998

Special Act Award (Gold)

On Tuesday, February 17, 1998 at 2:00 p.m. a CT Equipment Operator (CEO) was installing tire chains on the front left wheel of a snow blower. Brian Kammer, a Heavy Equipment Mechanic (HEM), was running the rear engine of the snow blower to check for oil leaks. The CEO stepped in front of the left front tire with his back to a spinning jackshaft that powered the snow blower auger. As the CEO turned to back away from the tire, his coat sleeve came into contact with the flange at the end of the jackshaft and the CEO was pulled into the spinning shaft. Mr. Kammer was walking around the snow blower when he saw the CEO "bouncing around" in front of the tire. Mr. Kammer pulled the CEO away from the machine, called for help, and administered first aid to the employee's profusely bleeding arm. Mr. Kammer realized the man was going into shock so he continued to talked to him until the EMT's arrived. Brian Kammer then moved the equipment for the rescue helicopter-landing pad. The CEO was airlifted to a local hospital where he underwent surgery to repair torn tendons and arteries.

By quickly pulling Mr. Kammer from the rotating jackshaft and rendering immediate first aid to the victim, Mr. Kammer placed his personal safety or possibly his own life at risk by reaching into the large, sharp, heavy metal jackshaft to pull the victim free. The incident also served to confirm the extremely unsafe procedure of CalTRANS personnel attempting to perform any work on or about the snow blower before the equipment was completely shut down. As a result of a subsequent Cal/OSHA investigation into the accident, it was recommended that special guards should be installed on the exposed snow blower jackshafts as a protective, safety measure.

Anand Kapoor

Caltrans Transportation Engineer

Department of Transportation

5/4/2006

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 4, 2006, Department of Transportation employees Anand Kapoor and John Fitzgerald were working near an intersection in the city of Visalia and witnessed a car run a red light and broadside an SUV. The SUV rolled several times and came to rest on its left side. The woman inside began screaming that she was trapped and smoke starting coming from the vehicle. Mr. Fitzgerald and Mr. Kapoor rushed to the vehicle and ripped the windshield out with their bare hands. They pulled the woman to safety and comforted her until the paramedics arrived. Mr. Fitzgerald and Mr. Kapoor suffered bruises and minor cuts to their hands and elbows. Without a thought for their own personal safety, both were able to rescue a trapped woman from a smoking vehicle saving her from further injury or death.

Roy B. Kardell

Sergeant

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

7/2/1962

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 12:15 on Monday July 2, 1962, Sergeant Roy B Kardell, assigned to Isolation-Condemned Row First Watch at the California State Prison at San Quentin, was alerted to possible trouble in the row as Officer C L Deatrick had not returned to his station in the gun cage of the isolation- condemned row area. He left the office where he had been posting the row log for the day and found himself confronted by an inmate with a revolver in his hand. The inmate ordered Sergeant Kardell to lie down on the floor. Sergeant Kardell decided to try and tackle the inmate and when he leaned forward to do so, the inmate struck Sergeant Kardell on the head with the revolver. Sergeant Kardell was then bound and placed in his office Fiver other inmates were present during this time including one armed with a riot gun taken from Officer Deatrick The inmate armed with the riot gun continually threated Sergeant Kardell and Officer Deatrick, he stated that he wouldn't hesitate to shoot as he had shot a cop before At approximately 12:45 a.m. the inmates realized it was time for the Officers to make check calls and one inmate called the operator purporting to be Sergeant Kardell Officer Deatrick was forced to make his own telephone call from the gun cage telephone. When it became time to report the inmate count, one of the inmates dialed the operator and ordered Sergeant Kardell to give the count Sergeant Kardell realized that the count is normally reported to the control Sergeant but as a ruse, he gave the operator the count, hoping the operator would understand that there was trouble in the row. Realizing there had been a mistake, the inmates held a 38 caliber revolver to Sergeant Kardell's head and ordered him to dial the right number. Sergeant Kardell told them to dial the correct number and upon hearing the voice of the control room sergeant, Sergeant Kardell stated "trouble in the row." This was heard by the inmates, one of whom said, "you really loused up, now we are going to kill you" Because of this heroic act, the six inmates were confined to the isolation condemned row area and as a result, there was no further damage in the Institution and no one else was injured or killed.

Eric Karla

Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/19/1996

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 19 1996, at approximately 11 08 am, Officer Karla was on an enforcement stop northbound on US 101 south of State Route 25 in unincorporated Santa C ara Co unty A citizen stopped at Officer Kar a's location and advised him of a major injury co ision at the intersection of State Route 25 and B oomfie d Road Arriving at the scene, Officer Kar a observed a tractor/trailer combination and a Jeep Cherokee b ocking both directions of State Route 25 just north of B oomfield Road. Officer Karla, a departmenta Emergency Medical Technician, retrieved his EMT kit and approached both vehicles. He contacted the tractor/ trai er driver and determined he was uninjured. He then focused his attention on the driver of the Jeep who had sustained major facial and neck injuries. Officer Kar a gained access to the driver of the Jeep through the right front door as the left side of the vehic e was inaccessible. As Officer Kar a began to assess the driver's injuries, a citizen advised the officer the engine compartment was on fire. Officer Kar a retu med to his patrol unit for the fire extinguisher. As he returned to the Jeep, he observed the fire spreading to the entire undercarriage of the Jeep The fire was beginning to enter the passenger compartment. As Officer Karla re-entered the Jeep, the driver reached his arms toward Officer Kar a. Officer Karla ifted him out of the seat, over the center console and extricated him from the vehic e Officer Karla carried the driver approximate y 50 feet when the vehicle exp oded completely engulfed in flames. Officer Karla resumed medical attention to the driver unti the paramedics arrived.

Adam F. Kavanagh

Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

8/5/2005

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 5, 2005, at approximately 7:15 a.m., California Department of Fish and Game Warden Adam Kavanagh, Patrol Lieutenant John Nores and Warden Kyle Kroll collaborated with a team of law enforcement officers from the Santa Clara Sheriff's Office Special Operations Unit on an early morning marijuana eradication detail in the mountains west of Los Gatos. The team hiked several miles to reach the marijuana plantation. As they moved into the area, at least two growers ambushed the team, shooting Warden Kroll through both legs. As Warden Kroll fell to the ground, Lt. Nores returned fire and positioned himself between Warden Kroll and the growers in an attempt to protect Warden Kroll from being shot again. Sheriff's deputies also returned fire and later discovered they had shot and killed one of the growers. After the initial firefight, the team was unable to locate the growers due to dense brush. They immediately set up a defensive perimeter, and Lt. Nores assessed Warden Kroll's injuries and administered first aid. Warden Kroll's gunshot wounds were bleeding profusely, so Lt. Nores applied direct pressure, covered and tied-off both leg wounds. The team held their perimeter and radioed their situation to dispatch. A short time later, the rescue helicopter flew over to mark the teams' location but was directed not to land until the hillside was secured from the possible sniper fire from the still unknown location of the armed growers. For the next two and a half hours, the team waited and maintained a perimeter. Lt. Nores continued to apply first aid and monitor Warden Kroll's vital signs. When the helicopter returned, the team was told that a rescue basket could not be lowered due to the dense vegetation. Without hesitation, Warden Kavanagh volunteered to cut a landing pad. Knowing that he would have to break cover, making him a possible target for the armed growers, Warden Kavanagh cut an 8 x 8 landing pad with his machete as the rest of the team covered him. With the landing pad now established, the rescue helicopter lowered a medic and basket to safely retrieve Warden Kroll and delivered him to the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center. Due to Lt. Nores and Warden Kavanagh's professionalism, bravery, and self-sacrifice, Warden Kroll survived, recovered, and ultimately returned to full duty.

Adam F. Kavanagh

Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

8/5/2005

Special Act Award (Gold)

August 5, 2005, California Department of Fish and Game Warden Adam Kavanagh and Patrol Lieutenant John Nores performed an act of heroism at great risk to their personal safety in order to save the life of a fellow Game Warden who was shot and wounded. At approximately 7:15 a.m., a team of law enforcement officers from the Department of Fish and Game and the Santa Clara Sheriff's Office Special Operations Unit went into the mountains west of Los Gatos, on an early morning marijuana eradication detail. Lt. Nores and Warden Kavanagh were accompanied by Warden Kyle Kroll. The team hiked several miles to reach the marijuana plantation. As they moved into the area, at least two growers ambushed the team, shooting Warden Kroll through both legs. As Warden Kroll fell to the ground, Lt. Nores returned fire and positioned himself between Warden Kroll and the growers in an attempt to protect Warden Kroll from being shot again. Sheriff's deputies also returned fire and later discovered they had shot and killed one of the growers. After the initial firefight, the team was unable to locate the growers due to dense brush. They immediately set up a defensive perimeter, and Lt. Nores assessed Warden Kroll's injuries and administered first aid. The gunshot wounds to Warden Kroll's legs were bleeding profusely so Lt. Nores applied direct pressure, covered and tied-off both leg wounds. The team held their perimeter and radioed their situation to dispatch. A short time later, the rescue helicopter flew over and marked the teams' location on the hill. However, the rescue crew was directed not to land until the hillside was secured from the possible sniper fire from the still unknown location of the armed growers. For the next two and a half hours, the team waited and maintained a perimeter. Lt. Nores continued to apply first aid and monitor Warden Kroll's vital signs. When the helicopter returned, the team was told that a rescue basket could not be lowered due to the dense vegetation. Without hesitation, Warden Kavanagh volunteered to cut a landing pad. Knowing that he would have to break cover, making him a possible target for the armed growers, Warden Kavanagh cut an 8 x 8 landing pad with his machete as the rest of the team covered him. With the landing pad now established, the rescue helicopter lowered a medic and basket to safely retrieve Warden Kroll and delivered him to the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center. Due to Lt. Nores and Warden Kavanagh's professionalism, bravery, and self-sacrifice, Warden Kroll survived, recovered, and ultimately returned to full duty.

John W. Kearns, Jr.

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

8/9/2007

Special Service Award (Silver)

At approximately 12:00 p.m., on August 9, 2007, the Pine Grove Maintenance crew was working on westbound Highway 88 at Buckhorn Ridge Road near Ione when a Mule Creek State Prison inmate bus, towing a trailer, passed their location. As the bus drove down the hill, a wheel came off the trailer, causing sparks to ignite the grass next to the roadway. A grassfire quickly ensued burning through the meadow and into the trees. Seeing the blaze, Lead Worker Dave McDaniel sent Michael Blake in his grader to the west flank of the fire where he proceeded to cut a fire line from the highway up into the trees. Meanwhile Leonard Marsh, Kyle Gaspard and John Kearns, using a narrow private drive, drove their large water tanker in from the east. With Kyle Gaspard manning the water hose, they kept the east flank of the fire from reaching two homes located within the path of the fire. Even after the arrival of the Cal Fire units, these employees continued to support the fire trucks with water until the fire was contained. Dave McDaniel and Scot McKinney set up traffic control and managed to keep the road open to traffic, while directing emergency vehicles to the fire. Cal Fire dispatched 6 engines, 2 hand crews, 1 dozer and 2 helicopters to handle this fire. The immediate actions taken by the maintenance crew prevented the fire from reaching catastrophic levels and saved at least two homes from possible destruction. Cal Fire commended the crew for their quick response.

Joe Kennedy

Heavy Fire Equipment Operator

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

11/18/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)

On November 8, 2018, at 9:00 a.m., California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Heavy Fire Equipment Operator Joe Kennedy responded to the Camp Fire in Paradise. As Mr. Kennedy arrived in Paradise the fire was establishing itself along the Pentz Road corridor with hundreds of residents, patients and employees of Feather River Hospital trying to flee the area. Engine 2390 with Captain John Jessen and two firefighters became stuck in traffic along with dozens of other vehicles on Pearson Road near Dry Creek. Captain Jessen ordered air support, but conditions were too extreme. Then over the radio came the request, "Can we get a dozer to move cars on Pearson Road?" Joe Kennedy was nearby on Dozer 2342. Since all roads were jammed with traffic, he drove the dozer through back yards to get to Pearson Road from the hospital. As he was heading towards Pearson Road, he encountered a California Highway Patrol officer and nurses trying to escape the fire on foot. The visibility was extremely limited and the CHP officer waved his flashlight to get Mr. Kennedy's attention. When Mr. Kennedy stopped the dozer to see what was happening, the nurses got into the dozer. Mr. Kennedy explained he didn't have room for the two of them inside the dozer and directed them to get into the fire engine directly behind him. Engine 2362 took the nurses and the CHP officer back to the temporary refuge area set up at the hospital helipad. Traffic was at a standstill on Pearson Road throughout the Dry Creek drainage, which was burning under strong winds with the flames consuming brush, timber, structures and vehicles. Dry Creek is a deep ravine and acts as a chimney for fires. Vehicles two and three across were all facing west trying to get to Skyway and out of town. The vehicles on Pearson Road that were nearest the ravine were catching fire as the wind and fire burned intensely in the drainage. It would not be long before the cars in the middle and right side also caught fire. As it was, people had bailed out of the burning cars and taken refuge in cars further from the flames. If something was not done soon, there could be more fatalities. Mr. Kennedy used the dozer to push cars off the road, opening a path for the remaining vehicles and allowing the trapped vehicles to escape the flames, saving many lives. With no regard for his own safety, Mr. Kennedy went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Heavy Fire Equipment Operator Joe Kennedy

Thomas J. Kennelly

Forest Firefighter

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/22/1959

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 22, 1959, Forest Firefighter Thomas J. Kennelly then employed by the California Division of Forestry at the Paso robles Forest Fire Station was a member of a crew responding to a grass and brush fire burning about ten miles east of Paso Robles. Upon arrival at the fire, the crew was assigned to and immediately attacked the head of the fire. At approximately 4 00 P M there was a sudden blow-up, which compelled Kennelly and his Foreman Leo L Boyd to return to the cab of the fire truck in order to escape direct exposure to the flame. After the fire passed over the truck Boyd and Kennelly, because of the heat and lack of oxygen, were forced to leave the truck and go through the flames into the burned area At that time Kennelly had received flash burns about his face. Soon after leaving the truck Kennelly found the Foreman Boyd's clothing was on fire He immediately went to Boyd's assistance attempting to extinguish the fire by tearing off Boyd's clothing with his bare hands. He eventually succeeded in this with great difficulty and exposure to himself. Because of Kennelly's action he received extensive third-degree burns on his hands. For sometime the doctors thought he would suffer the loss of his fingers on both hands. We are happy to report that Kennelly will retain all of his fingers

Peter Kensinger

Officer

California Highway Patrol

11/10/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Peter Kensinger and Officer Paul Yonezawa, on November 10, 2001, performed an act of heroism at risk to their personal safety when they rescued two Sheriff Deputies from a burning patrol vehicle. At 1:40 a. m., Officers Yonezawa and Kensinger had just completed a Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol Investigation on Eastbound Compton Boulevard just west of Cookacre Street. As the officers secured the offender in their patrol car, they observed two Los Angeles County Sheriff patrol cars collide in the intersection of Atlantic Avenue and Compton Boulevard. The force of the impact caused one of the patrol vehicles to strike an overhead light pole and concrete wall, sustaining extensive damage, the officers also observed flames coming from the engine compartment. Officers Yonezawa and Kensinger arrived at the scene and observed two Sheriff Deputies unconscious inside the damaged patrol vehicle. Officer Yonezawa attempted to open the door on the driver's side, but found it was jammed due to the collision. He retrieved the fire extinguisher from his patrol vehicle and attempted to extinguish the fire, which was growing in intensity and filling the patrol vehicle with smoke. Officer Yonezawa, fearing for the deputy's life, observed his window was rolled down, reached through the window and pulled the deputy to safety. He covered the injured deputy with a blanket to prevent him from going into shock while continuing to monitor his vital signs. Officer Kensinger positioned himself on the passenger's side of the burning patrol vehicle. The door on the passenger side was also jammed and the window rolled up. As the deputy regained consciousness, he began to scream and attempted to exit the patrol vehicle. Because of the damage to the patrol vehicle and the intensity of the fire, Officer Kensinger broke the window out with his flashlight, pulling the deputy out of the patrol vehicle. Within moments after extricating both deputies from the patrol vehicle, the passenger compartment was completely engulfed in flames.

Bob Kerber

Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor

Department of Transportation

4/27/1992

Special Act Award (Gold)

On April 27, 1992, at approximately 3:10 p.m., Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor Bob Kerber was traveling southbound on State Route 99 when he saw a northbound vehicle headed toward the median, strike a tree and catch on fire. Mr. Kerber reacted immediately, radioing dispatch and requesting emergency vehicles.

He was soon joined by other rescuers who used fire extinguishers to keep the flames down as he pried the door open with a crow bar. The dense smoke and flames hampered the rescue effort, but Mr. Kerber located the victim under the dash – one leg was stuck under the gas pedal making it extremely difficult to remove him. Despite the ever present danger of fire and explosion, Mr. Kerber was able to pull the victim free and with the assistance of the rescuers, Mr. Kerber carried the man a safe distance away from the burning vehicle.

Michael A. Kerr

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/7/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 7, 2001 at approximately 2:00 p.m., the Victorville area was experiencing severe thunderstorms and flash floods. Officer David Bradford observed a pickup truck overturned onto its driver side, submerged in approximately four feet of water. Officer Michael Kerr arrived on the scene just as Ryan Bird, age 14, jumped from the passenger door and the rushing water trapped him against the undercarriage. The Officers realized there were people trapped inside the vehicle. Already on the scene were Caltrans workers Mr. Terry Gillich and Mr. Gary Ratliff and a private citizen Mr. Jim Payne who offered their assistance with the rescue. The pickup truck was being pushed downstream by the current with Ryan Bird screaming for help. The rescuers formed a human chain and entered the water. Three occupants of the overturned pickup, Ryan Bird, Mr. James Milliken, age 75, and Nathan Milliken, age 14, were pulled to safety. Ms. Carrie Milliken, age 70 and Natalie Shoemaker, age 16, were still trapped inside the pickup truck as the water continued to rise. When the pickup truck started to overturn onto its top, Officer Bradford entered the water and positioned himself at a 45-degree angle, pushing against the hood of the truck to keep it from completely overturning while he was submerged up to his neck in water. Ms. Milliken finally climbed out of the truck and jumped into the water, but was immediately pinned to the undercarriage by the swift current. Ms. Shoemaker climbed out of the pickup and successfully jumped to safety. The water began to pull Ms. Milliken alongside the undercarriage and off the back of the pickup truck. Mr. Payne broke from the human chair and dove into the water after her. Mr. Payne reached Ms. Milliken and kept her from being pulled downstream. Mr. Payne and Ms. Milliken were assisted by the Apple Valley Fire Department personnel who arrived on the scene. As the rescuers were retreating to a position of safety, Officer Bradford let go of the pickup truck. He lost his footing and fell into the water. Officer Kerr grabbed hold of Officer Bradford and pulled him to safety. The pickup truck overturned completed onto its top, with the cab completely submerged in the water. All of the victims escaped serious injury

Charles Kilsby

Class title: Unknown

Employment Development Department

6/30/1986

Special Service Award (Silver)

On June 30, 1986, in the San Francisco Office of the Emp oyment Deve opment Department, unemp oyment insurance division, employee Charles Ki sby, along with three additiona EDD personne , strugg ed with an armed gunman, at a great threat to his safety and ife, helped manage to disarm the distraught man who was trying to shoot another EDD emp oyee within their vicinity Mr Kilsby's courage to tack e a high y emotional, potentially explosive individua brandishing a gun put his life in jeopardy Not on y was he instrumental in saving the life of the intended shooting victim, but also prevented the threat of additional injuries or death to a the other employees in the office

Patrick Kimes

Sergeant

Department of Justice

4/12/2012

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On April 12, 2012, responding to reports of shots fired and officers down, Sergeant Patrick Kimes, along with ten other officers of the Modesto police department, arrived on scene to find Stanislaus County Sheriff's Deputy Bob Paris and civilian locksmith Glendon Engert lying unconscious outside the front door leading to the suspect's apartment front door. Armed with an arsenal, the suspect had barricaded himself inside his apartment and exchanging fire with a second deputy, Deputy Mike Glinskas, who was pinned down and had issued the call for help. Placing ballistic shields across the front passenger window of a Modesto police car, a group of officers took cover on the driver's side and used the vehicle as mobile cover to advance on the apartment while the remaining officers deployed a flash bang diversionary device. Their coordinated efforts were successful in that they were able to extract Glinskas and escort him to safety and medical attention. They were also able to recover Paris and Engert, both of whom had unfortunately been mortally wounded.

After an eleven hour standoff, the suspect took his own life. Because of actions of Sergeant Kimes and his fellow officers, prevented the deadly standoff from escalating further and thereby threatening more lives.

Troy King

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/22/2002

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Sergeant Lynne Blum, and Officers Andrey English and Troy King, on August 22, 2002, performed acts of heroism at risk to their personal safety by rescuing a victim from a burning vehicle. At approximately 3:17 a.m., Sergeant Blum, and Officers English and King, were working routine patrol in West Los Angeles, when they responded to a call for assistance at the scene of a traffic collision. The driver, Mr. Juan Herrera, was trapped inside his burning pick-up, which was wedged against the center divider wall. The driver, who was initially unconscious, awoke disoriented and started to panic as the fire began to enter through the fire wall around his feet. The Fire Department had not yet arrived on the scene. Sergeant Blum and Officers English and King decided any further delay in responding to this situation would likely result in the loss of the driver's life. The officers were unable to extricate the driver from the passenger side and retreated from the pick-up truck. The driver was still incoherent but becoming more aware he was starting to catch fire. He was resisting efforts by the officers to free him. Sergeant Blum and Officers English and King, with flames raging around them from the engine compartment and the melting dashboard, continued to work feverishly and were able to pull the driver to safety from the burning pick-up truck, just as the passenger compartment became fully engulfed. The driver who sustained major injuries was transported to a local hospital.

Donald F. Kiser

Class Title: Unknown

Department of Transportation

2/18/1986

Special Service Award (Silver)

During the infamous "Floods of '86", on February 18, 1986, at the "Y" intersection of State Routes 121 and 12, Sonoma County, Donald F Kiser observed a car stalling amid rapidly rising waters. Following a call to a co-worker for assistance, he entered the water and attempted to secure the car's bumper with a chain Unsuccessful in his effort, he saw the vehicle starting to drift into an even deeper location. He quickly made his way back to his truck, tied a life line around his waist, and went to the rapidly submerging vehicle which contained a young couple and their two-year old daughter. First rescuing the young child by carrying her back to his co-worker, he made his way back to the vehicle to rescue the young couple. At one point during this time, the water level was windshield high with only a 12 to 18-inch air pocket in which to breathe. In all, he made six trips to the vehicle-endangering his life for the safety of others. The CHP reported that Kiser and his co-worker saved the lives of those three people.

Jon Kitamura

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/28/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Jon Kitamura, on August 28, 2004, performed an act of heroism at risk to his personal safety by rescuing four people from a burning vehicle. At approximately 10:15 a.m., while off-duty, Officer Kitamura of the Solano Area encountered a solo vehicle collision northbound State Route 45, south of Grimes Boat Landing. The Vehicle impacted a tree adjacent to the roadway, causing all the vehicle's doors to be inoperable. The collision also caused the vehicle to catch on fire. The vehicle driver was able to exit the vehicle, but was bloodied and dazed. Four other adult passengers, however, remained trapped in the vehicle in a semi-conscious state. Upon encountering the vehicle, Officer Kitamura directed the dazed driver to a position of safety award from the vehicle. Officer Kitamura then assisted the left-rear passenger Desiree O. Lopez from the vehicle via the drivers' side window. Thereafter, Officer Kitamura broke the rear vehicle window with an axe (supplied by a nearby unidentified neighbor) to gain access to the remaining passengers. Officer Kitamura entered the burning, smoke-filled vehicle, dragged rear passengers over the rear seat; pulled them through the rear window, and placed them outside the vehicle. Although the fire had spread to the passenger compartment, Officer Kitamura remained in the burning vehicle, climbing over the front seat to access the right-front passenger. Officer Kitamura dragged one passenger to the rear window and pulled him out of the window to a position of safety. Approximately one minute after the removal of all the vehicles' occupants, the vehicle became totally engulfed in fire. After removing the victims Officer Kitamura remained on scene, used his emergency medical training to triage the victims for Sacramento Fire District personnel and provided emergency medical care to the victims. He also convinced two of the victims, who were attempting to flee because they had outstanding warrants, to remain at the scene

Greg Klingenberg

California Highway Patrol Lieutenant

California Highway Patrol

8/21/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 21, 2001, at approximately 7:00 p.m. Officer Greg Klingenberg responded to a shots fired call in the unincorporated community of Dunlap, CA. Officer Klingenberg arrived on scene within 15 minutes and discovered that Fresno County Sheriff's Deputy Erik Telen had been ambushed while searching a home for a burglary suspect with his partner, Deputy Brent Stalker. Unbeknownst to Deputy Telen or Deputy Stalker the residence contained numerous weapons, including a 12 gauge shotgun and a .357 magnum pistol. Officer Klingenberg took a position of cover as Sergeant Joe Rascon and Deputy Jim Lail entered the residence to extricate Deputy Telen. The suspect immediately began firing shots at the deputies through the kitchen wall The deputies called for assistance, and Officer Klingenberg entered the kitchen, knowingly exposing himself to death and serious injury, to provide cover for the deputies. Despite being fired upon by the suspect in the residence, Sergeant Rascon and Deputy Lail returned fire, and were able to successfully extricate Deputy Telen from the residence Officer Klingenberg, Sergeant Rascon, and Deputy Lail moved Deputy Telen to a position of cover behind a vehicle in the driveway of the residence. Sergeant Rascon instructed the deputies to provide cover fire while Officer Klingenberg drove his patrol vehicle to Deputy Telen's location, where Sergeant Rascon and Officer Klingenberg loaded Deputy Telen into Officer Klingenberg's patrol vehicle At least one shot was fired while Sergeant Rascon and Officer Klingenberg attempted to load Deputy Telen into the patrol vehicle. Due to the immediate risk of gunfire, Sergeant Rascon and Officer Klingenberg were not able to fully load Deputy Telen into the patrol vehicle and the passenger door remained open while Officer Klingenberg drove in reverse down the driveway to medical assistance As a result of this incident, Deputy Erik Telen suffered a gunshot wound to his head. Despite the heroic extraction and transportation from the residence to medical personnel, Deputy Telen succumbed to his injuries on August 21, 2001

With no regard for his own safety, Lieutenant Klingenberg's heroic act secured the safety of several Fresno County Sherriff's deputies, and attempted to save the life of another The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Lieutenant Greg Klingenberg.

Gary Kneeshaw

Deputy

Other

8/21/2010

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

The Sheriff's Aerial Support to Regional Enforcement Agencies (ASTREA) Copters 10 and 12 were en route to the Monte Fire, in an unincorporated area of Lakeside. The Sheriff's Communication Center advised the patrol aircraft that two rock climbers, Meg Rippy and Andre Doria, were stranded on the side of a cliff, with a fast moving fire approaching them Deputy Scott Bligh and Deputy Gary Kneeshaw immediately lifted off in a helicopter from base to assist in rescuing the climbers. With clearance from Cal Fire to fly at a low level, the deputies were guided by Deputy Walden (Copter 10) to the place where he had located Rippy and Doria The crew rescued Rippy, but had to abort its rescue of Doria because of a steep drop off and winds Deputy Kneeshaw stayed behind with Doria until the helicopter could return Deputy Bligh returned and Deputy Kneeshaw, loading Doria into the front seat, realized that the flames were only 10 feet from the tail rotor and needed to act quickly Deputy Kneeshaw immediately climbed onto the right skid and yelled to Deputy Bligh to lift off Deputy Bligh flew the helicopter through and eventually out of the smoke and down to the valley floor with Deputy Kneeshaw standing unsecured on the skid for the entire flight. The entire rescue operation took only five minutes

Kurt C. Kovac

Senior Engineer

Department of Water Resources

2/8/1998

Special Service Award (Silver)

Water Resources Technician Richard " Burnett, Associate Engineering Geologist William Shanks, Associate Engineer Ernest Taylor, and Senior Engineer Kurt C Kovac, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great personal risk to their own safety in the rescue of Ms. Rachelle Anderson's two small children, Oscar and Alicia, who were trapped in an overturned car that was sinking 15 feet offshore in the storm-swollen, frigid, swift, and muddy Sacramento River On the morning of February 8, 1998, at approximately 7:55 a.m., while on special flood duty for the Department of Water Resources in the Delta, near Antioch, Mr Burnett, Mr Shanks, Mr Taylor and Mr. Kovac were flagged down by a truck driver Looking down the perilous levee embankment, they saw a car sinking into the river, its rear half still visible above the surface of the water Mr Burnett immediately ran down the embankment, jumped into the water and swam towards the car As soon as he reached it, he saw Oscar, the baby, still strapped in the child car seat, sinking into the water. Mr. Burnett grabbed the car seat just as Oscar's head was slipping below the surface He freed Oscar and then handed him to Mr Taylor Mr Kovac met Mr Taylor on the muddy slope of the steep embankment and took Oscar up to the road. Still trapped inside the car, three-year old Alicia was still submerged and under peril with each passing second. Mr. Shanks first and then Mr. Burnett, dove under the murky, cold water into the car through the open door on the driver's side, each attempting to rescue Alicia It was very difficult to see and the rescuers became disoriented inside the overturned car. They each tried to free Alicia from her fastened seat belt without success. Time running out, the only way to rescue Alicia was to turn the car upright. The men joined forces, trying to reposition the car upright. Incredibly, the 3,000 pound car turned easily Mr Burnett dove under the water, reached in the passenger-side door and released the unconscious child from her seat belt Mr Burnett and Mr Taylor rushed to get her ashore. By this time Alicia was unconscious, extremely cold, ashen, and not breathing; her body was completely limp. Mr. Burnett and another individual took turns giving her mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Alicia finally gasped for air, coughed her throat clear of water, and started breathing Mr. Taylor and Mr Kovac wrapped Alicia in jackets and sweatshirts, and Mr. Shanks held her in the warm truck until paramedics arrived. Meanwhile, Mr. Kovac brought Ms. Anderson up the embankment to be close to her children The State of California takes great pride in presenting these medals of valor for acts of heroism extending far and above the normal call of duty

Clifford Kozlowski

Water and Sewage Supervisor

Department of Mental Health

12/14/2006

Special Service Award (Silver)

On December 14, 2006, 10:25 a.m., California Department of Mental Health employees Clifford Kozlowski and Stanley Streeter were performing routine physical plant maintenance and operations duties when they both noticed a hospital police canine was trapped in a wastewater treatment pond. The canine's handler was attempting to climb down the pond to rescue his dog when he started to slide down the pond slope and into the deep raw sewage pond. Mr. Streeter quickly grabbed a rope and a rescue hook. While Mr. Streeter held the rope, Mr. Kozlowski, with rescue hook in one hand, repelled down the steep, slippery pond bank. As Mr. Kozlowski neared the pond surface, he reached out into the pond, and after some struggle and effort, was able to nudge the exhausted and near drowning canine to the pond bank near his handler.

Mr. Streeter then pulled Mr. Kozlowski up the bank with the rope. They then quickly re-positioned themselves to assist the canine and his handler, who was slowly slipping into the water. Mr. Streeter and Mr. Kozlowski threw the rope down to the handler, and pulled him and his partner "Arco" up and out of danger. Mr. Streeter and Mr. Kozlowski's quick actions saved them from drowning or injury

Richard B. Kramer

Fish and Game Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

8/8/1959

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 8, 1959, Warden Richard B. Kramer, while on routine patrol in the back country of Orange County, observed a forest fire in the Cleveland National Forest. He immediately proceeded into the fire area to offer his assistance to the firefighting agencies. After entry into the fire area, the fire reached such proportions that any exit would be through a raging fire area with severe heat and smoke and the danger of falling and burning timbers. Warden Kramer found a position that offered him personal safety that was already burned out. He observed three badly burned firemen and stopped to help them. He offered to attempt to transport them to a hospital. The three fireman refused at first saying they didn't have a chance to get through the fire. Warden Kramer finally convinced them it was worth trying. On the way out, he observed two more badly burned firemen, one burned so critically he could not more. Warden Kramer stopped, put them in the car and continued. He drove through the fire and radioed ahead to alert the Corona hospital. On arrival at the hospital with the five emergency cases, he further assisted the doctors and nurses by cutting away the wounded firemen's clothing and making them as comfortable as possible. Of the five badly burned firemen, two survived, thanks to Warden Kramer.

Will Krings

Firefighter

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/20/2000

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Darryl Sanford, and Firefighter Will Krings, on, September 20th, 2000, performed an act of heroism at risk to their personal safety by entering a victim's home to save a civilian. Fire Captain Sanford and Firefighter Krings of Butte County, Engine 71, found an older wood frame structure surrounded by heavy fuels on three sides. Firefighter Krings attempted to save the house by laying fire hoses outside the structure (alone) allowing Fire Captain Sanford the needed time to attempt the rescue. However, this idea was soon abandoned due to forty-foot flames impinged on the structure from the east, north and south. Fire Captain Sanford instructed Firefighter Krings to disconnect the hoses and take the engine to safer ground as he entered the structure to get the resident out. Firefighter Krings made his way back to the flame-engulfed home and attempted to enter the residence to aid Fire Captain Sanford in the rescue attempt. The situation was worsening quickly and Firefighter Krings knew that it would be best not to enter the residence but instead help secure a way for Fire Captain Sanford and the resident to escape the burning home. Firefighter Krings went around outside the burning home, found a window, and began to knock and yell for Fire Captain Sanford to exit at his location. However, the inside exit to the window in the room was thickly cloaked in smoke and heavily cluttered with the resident's furnishings making escape impossible. Meanwhile Fire Captain Sanford moved the woman into the back bedroom as the fire spread into the house front room and kitchen areas. He was unable to get the overcome victim out of the house through one small high bedroom window. As the fire began to enter and flash over the bedroom ceiling, Fire Captain Sanford had to jump for his own life out of the small window.

Firefighter Krings assisted in getting Fire Captain Sanford who had suffered moderate to serious burns out of a very dangerous situation to a safety area after he jumped through the small high bedroom window to escape the flames. Then Firefighter Krings drove away from the flame-consumed home and surrounding burning terrain to seek further medical attention for Fire Captain Sanford. Despite heroic effort to save Betty Brooks, the Concow resident died in the burning house. Fire Captain Sanford suffered first and second-degree burns on his hands back elbow and face. Both Fire Captain Sanford and Firefighter Krings greatly risked their lives in an attempt to save a civilian.

Kyle Kroll

Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

6/17/2011

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 17, 2011, at approximately 3:12 p.m., Warden Kyle Kroll was patrolling the north fork of the Feather River when he heard a 911 call about a vehicle over the cliff and into the river. He was five miles away. He arrived on scene to find the car teetering on a rock, approximately 100-150 feet below the highway in a section of the river that was flowing fast and extremely cold due to the warm weather and snowmelt. Warden Kroll descended the cliff, crossed the river, and found a male driver coming in and out of consciousness with a large amount of blood flowing from his head, nose, and mouth. The female passenger had numerous lacerations, but was conscious. Warden Kroll provided basic first aid to the woman and asked her to apply pressure to her husband's wounds. Warden Kroll determined the woman had no neck or spinal injuries and at her request, decided to remove her from the car. As she moved however, he felt the car shift. He told her she needed to stay in the car until more help arrived as Warden Kroll realized the weight of the driver and passenger was balancing the car on the rock and, if it moved, the car would be caught in the rapids and washed downstream. He retrieved a tow strap and chain from his truck and got under the car to attach straps to the front and rear axles. He, and a PG&E worker that had just arrived, tied the straps to a tree and a rock to stabilize it. Fire rescue personnel and CHP arrived on scene. There was concern about the victims falling into the river during the extraction, so with a CHP Officer holding his belt, Warden Kroll again got underneath the car, attached the chain to it and secured it to a tree. It was then determined that the Jaws of Life were needed. Fire rescue personnel were still concerned that the vehicle could fall into the river when they climbed onto the roof, so a tow truck lowered its winch cable, and Warden Kroll and a CHP officer went under the car and attached it to the frame. Warden Kroll helped remove the man and woman from the car and up the cliff where they were taken by helicopter to the hospital. Sadly, the man did not survive, but his wife recovered from her injuries.

James Ladd

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/30/1986

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 30, 1986, California Highway Patrol Officer James Ladd crawled inside a smashed bus perched precariously in the Walker River, to organize the rescue of those trapped inside. Officer Ladd jeopardized his safety and life in an effort to save the lives of others, an act that went courageously above the normal call of duty

John Lago

California Highway Patrol Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

9/12/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 12, 2008, California Highway Patrol Sergeant John Lago and Officer Allyn Ball arrived on the scene of a head-on collision involving a Metrolink Commuter Train and a Union Pacific freight train in the City of Chatsworth. The collision occurred during the height of rush hour, resulting in injuries and death to many people. In addition to the widespread wreckage from the collision, it had also caused a large fire that quickly began to engulf the freight train and Metrolink locomotives. When Officer Allyn Ball arrived, he ran toward the burning Union Pacific train and crawled under the unstable freight cars in order to access the scene and look for victims. Officer Ball located and provided first aid to a disorientated, injured victim walking near the wreckage. He and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Deputy Alfred Guerrero then entered one of the passenger cars where they encountered thick smoke and heat from the adjacent fire. They located more injured victims, provided emergency first aid and assisted them in evacuating the car. Officer Ball was then relieved from the freight car by firefighters. Meanwhile, Sergeant John Lago arrived on scene and ran toward a still burning Union Pacific Train. He climbed into the freight locomotive in an attempt to locate the engineer and searched through the smoky car until he was advised by a fire captain the freight car was about to explode. Once the scene was stabilized, Sergeant Lago re-entered the train with other emergency personnel. Together they formed a human chain to remove the deceased occupants located in the wreckage. At one point a young woman on a stretcher, who was alive but suffering from severe injuries, was handed to Officer Ball. With the assistance of Sergeant Lago and five other CHP officers, Officer Ball and Sergeant Lago carried the young woman on a stretcher through the wreckage to medical personnel. The actions of Sergeant Lago and Officer Ball, without regard for their own safety, prevented further injuries or death to victims involved in this train collision, and were crucial in removing the serious and fatally wounded passengers.

Conrad Lahr

Water Resources Engineering Associate

Department of Water Resources

2/20/1979

Special Act Award (Gold)

During a very heavy snow storm with occasional avalanches in Plumas County, California, Water Resources Engineering Associates Conrad Lahr and Earl Stower of the California Department of Water Resources began their workday at the Beckwourth Subcenter. While hearing about several avalanche warnings, Conrad received a phone call about 8 a.m. from the Sheriff's office asking for help in rescuing nine Portola High School students and their instructor bogged down from the continuous heavy snow fall. As the rescue effort began, Conrad trucked the snow cat for 15 miles, then drove it for 12 miles in areas where the snow depth had reached 20 feet. Conrad, knowing the risk of avalanches and having few options for routes, had to deal with an avalanche that buried their snow cat with him, Earl, and the student's instructor for almost two hours. After shoveling themselves out of this avalanche, they continued their journey towards the students. They reached the students by 7 p.m. the same day. The students, who were formerly in a skiing class that Conrad was the assistant instructor, were wet and cold after being stuck in the snow storm for three days. Due to limited space on the snow cat, Conrad and Earl made two trips to rescue students ending the rescue effort at 3.a.m. the following day. Conrad and Earl were happy that all of the students were successfully rescued. The State of California takes great pride in presenting Conrad Lahr and Earl Stower these Gold Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

David Lalicker

Officer

Department of Justice

2/1/2014

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On November 1, 2013, a lone gunman walked into Terminal 3 of the Los Angeles International airport and opened fire with a semi-automatic assault rifle, killing one TSA officer and wounding seven civilians The initial call to Airport Police dispatch was received within 60 seconds of the shooting. Los Angeles Airport Police Sergeant Steve Zouzounis acknowledged the call and was on scene just 30 seconds later, and joined immediately by five Airport Police officers responding to the shooting David Lalicker, Brian Lopez, Robert Pedregon, Raymond Woods and Daniel Yu

Trying to determine possible accomplices among the hundreds of passengers, the six officers assumed a diamond shaped "active shooter formation" and advanced on the gunman. Determining the assailant was acting alone, the officers split into two groups of three and entered from opposite ends of the concourse the shooter was located The officers confronted him and exchanged gun fire. Due to the six officer's quick and decisive actions, the shooter was neutralized and taken into custody within four minutes after the initial "shots fired" radio call Paramedics transported the perpetrator to a local hospital where he was treated for his injuries. The actions of these officers prevented the shooter from further injuring or fatally wounding hundreds of airport personnel and travelers.

Andrew Lamar

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/18/2015

Special Service Award (Silver)

On Apri 18, 2015, at 1:50 a.m., Officer Andrew Lamar and his partner Officer Brock Vei ette received a radio transmission from California Highway Patrol Dispatch of a traffic collision with reported injuries at the Wi iams Hi recreation area, in an unincorporated area of Monterey County Upon their arriva at 3 23 a m , Officer Veillette and his partner were unab e to see any victims, but could hear cries for he p down the hillside. At great risk to their own safety, Officer Lamar and his partner decided to descend the hillside through the darkness to assess and treat the injured victims. Both officers s id down the steep hi side headfirst on their stomachs through areas that, if not navigated correctly, co d have resulted in serious injury or death to both officers During their descent, the officers were unab e to continuously hold their flashlights because their hands were occupied with ba ancing themselves or grabbing onto objects they could utilize to prevent them from s iding uncontrollably down the hillside. During the officers' descent, Coasta Division He icopter 70 arrived on scene and assisted them with locating the injured victims Approximately 50 feet down the hillside from the roadway, Officer Lamar encountered one deceased passenger from the vehicle. Approximate y 250 feet further down the steep hillside, Officer Lamar encountered an additional passenger from the vehicle who sustained major injuries to his leg and head Officer Lamar remained with the wo nded passenger while Officer Vei ette contin ed down the hillside to search for additional victims. Officer Lamar remained with the wounded passenger for an additional four hours until Mercy Air He icopter 20 and CHP Coastal Division Helicopter 70 returned to evacuate the injured As a resu t of this incident, the passenger sustained lacerations to his forehead and the back of his head, and a complaint of pain to his leg and arm, but survived the co ision. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Lamar's heroic service he ped to save the life of a traffic co ision victim trapped on a steep hi side The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Andrew Lamar

Kenneth Lane

Painter

Department of General Services

8/27/1984

Special Service Award (Silver)

On August 27, 1984 at approximately 2:30 p.m. Mr. Kenneth Lane responded to a woman's screams for help coming from a restroom on the first floor of the State Capitol. After asking a tour guide to notify the State Police, Mr. Lane accosted a man who came out of the ladies restroom. At approximately the same time, the injured victim appeared at the entrance of the restroom, pointed to the suspect and cried that he had tried to rape her. Mr. Lane chased the suspect even though he believed the man had a knife in his hand. The suspect ran towards an exit, but Mr. Lane prevented him from escaping by pinning him to the exit door and grabbing his arm and hair. With the help of a bystander, he returned the suspect to the scene of the crime where he was taken into custody by the State police.

Christian David Lara

Officer

California Highway Patrol

11/30/2022

Special Act Award (Gold)

On November 30, 2022, around 12:50 a.m., a vehicle was traveling eastbound on Interstate 8, just east of State Route 79 in San Diego County, when the solo driver suddenly made a U-turn. The driver was now traveling westbound on an eastbound freeway at approximately 70 miles per hour. Although it was a clear night, the driver was unaware and did not realize he was traveling in the wrong direction in a lane where a large portion had been removed due to ongoing construction. As a result, the driver struck an open trench. The impact caused the vehicle to propel airborne, while rotating in a clockwise manner, before colliding with the State Route 79 bridge rail, severely damaging the vehicle, roadway and railing. When the vehicle came to rest it was high centered on the bridge rail, with the front end partially hanging over and the engine on fire. Officer Christian Lara and his partner saw the vehicle flames and rushed to help. As they exited the freeway, they observed how the vehicle was partially hanging over the State Route 79 overcrossing with the engine compartment now fully engulfed in flames. Officer Lara swiftly approached the vehicle, seeing the male driver and recognizing he was unable to exit due to his injuries. He attempted to break the right front passenger window numerous times and eventually was successful. As the entire engine compartment of the vehicle continued to burn with the driver still inside, Officer Lara was able to effectively open the right front passenger door. Due to the driver's sustained injuries, he was unable to exit the vehicle on his own. Despite the growing flames and intense heat, Officer Lara displayed courage and outstanding judgment, risked his life, grabbed hold of the driver and successfully removed him from the vehicle. Shortly after, the whole vehicle became fully engulfed in flames and was destroyed. The driver sustained a fractured right ankle and complained of pain in his left foot and chest as a result of the crash, with no other remarkable injuries. Based on the sequence of events and without Officer Lara's selfless, lifesaving efforts, it is believed the driver would not have survived the collision.

The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol, Officer Christian Lara for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Brandon Dean Larsen

Environmental Planner

Department of Transportation

8/7/2008

Special Service Award (Silver)

At approximately 3:15 p.m. on August 7, 2008, California Department of Transportation employees Brandon Larsen and Brett Gronemeyer were returning to their office in Eureka after a field review in Fort Bragg. On Route 1, in a very remote area of Mendocino County, they came across an SUV with its hazard lights on and blocking part of the roadway. They pulled over to lend assistance and noticed two ropes tied to the vehicle's axle dangling over the edge of the road into the canyon. When they looked over the edge, they saw two people standing next to an injured woman sitting approximately one hundred feet down the canyon side, and a motorcycle at the bottom of the canyon. Mr. Gronemeyer and Mr. Larsen immediately returned to their vehicle to get safety vests and helmets. Mr. Larsen worked his way down the steep hillside to the injured female motorcyclist and the two motorists who had stopped to help. The motorcyclist had injuries to her left leg and foot, including a severe laceration on her heel and possible broken bones. Mr. Larsen suggested they stabilize her and wait for an ambulance, but she wanted to get off the side of the hill. He tied one of the ropes to her and helped her up the steep hillside, while one of the motorists helped guide her injured leg to prevent further injury. When they arrived back at the road, Mr. Larsen stabilized the woman by stopping the bleeding and bandaging her heel. Meanwhile, Mr. Gronemeyer, who had remained at the roadway, had directed a motorist to call for an ambulance and the CHP once phone service was obtained and had moved their vehicle to a more visible location to warn oncoming drivers of the hazard. He directed traffic around the parked vehicles, which posed a significant hazard due to the narrow roadway and blind corner. With the motorcyclist stabilized, Mr. Larsen turned his attention to helping Mr. Gronemeyer with traffic control until the ambulance arrived. The quick, decisive actions of these two Caltrans employees were responsible for the rescue and stabilization of this accident victim and prevented further collisions and injuries from oncoming traffic.

Keith A. Laub

Caltrans Maintenance Equipment Operator I

Department of Transportation

1/20/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 20, 2004 California Department of Transportation employees Jonathan B Bevan, Steve Carro , Keith A Laub and Henry Harden performed acts of heroism at risk to their personal safety when they prevented an occupied vehicle from plummeting over a snowy mountain cliff At 2 10 P.M , an SUV hit a patch of icy roadway south of Big Bear on State Highway 38 and spun off the highway near Onyx Summit The vehic e landed on its side and was perched precariously against a tree on a slope - about 800 feet above the canyon with the engine still running, the tires still spinning, and the driver helplessly trapped inside A retired Los Ange es police detective witnessed the accident and flagged down a Caltrans vehic e driven by Henry Harden. With the SUV slowly slipping down the mountainside, Mr Harden immediately radioed for help. Within minutes a Caltrans snowp ow driven by Keith Laub arrived. Soon thereafter, Jonathan Bevan and Steve Carro arrived on the scene. Jonathan Bevan and Steve Carroll provided the safety zone for Mr. Harden and Mr. Laub to work at securing the overturned vehic e to keep it from plummeting into the canyon. The situation was very dangerous, another vehicle lost control on the icy road and crashed within 15 feet of the snowp ows Mr Bevan and Mr. Carroll marked off the area with flares and began a flagging operation to control traffic and ensure that emergency vehicles cou d gain access. They moved onlookers to a safe area and, to give vehicles more traction, applied cinders to the roadway Meanwhi e, at 8500 feet, with snow fa ing, Mr Laub took a chain from the snowplow, climbed down the dangerously steep and icy slope, attached the chain to the SUV's ax e and secured the other end to one of the Caltrans snowplows. Mr. Harden then climbed down the steep, icy incline, attached another chain to the SUV and secured the other end to a second snowp.ow. To stabilize the SUV, the snowplows were then positioned to draw the chains into a taut "V." Understandably the SUV's driver was visib y re ieved They monitored the vehicle and the driver until rescue crews arrived. Emergency personnel then pried the door open and carried the driver to safety, who was taken to a nearby hospital for evaluation and released the same day. Without a thought to their own personal safety, Mr Bevan, Mr Carro , Mr Harden and Mr Laub assisted in the rescue effort that saved the driver's life.

Daniel Lawton

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/28/1994

Special Service Award (Silver)

At approximate y 7 40 a.m., Officer Lawson encountered a vehicle partially submerged in the Sacramento River Officer Lawton was advised by witnesses that the vehicle was occupied by an elderly fema e and had been in the water for approximately two minutes Officer Lawton quickly stripped to his trousers and donned his issued life vest and entered the water As Officer Lawton swam toward the vehic e (30-40 feet offshore), it sank beneath the surface eaving a trai of bubbles. Officer Lawton dove approximate y five feet to the sinking vehicle, but was unsuccessfu in his attempts to extricate the drowning woman. It was later determined she was a suicide victim.

Abby LeCureux

Program Technician III

Department of Consumer Affairs

9/29/2021

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the afternoon of September 29, 2021, Department of Consumer Affairs Consumer Information Center Call Center Program Technician III Abby LeCureux fielded a te ephone call via the CIC queue system. Sounding shaky and almost crying the caller asked if Ms LeCureux was affiliated with the California Hea th and Human Services Agency Ms LeCureux responded that she was not, at which point the caller said she needed to file a complaint and did not know who to file it with. Ms. LeCureux asked the caller how she might assist, at which point the caller started crying, stated that no one could help her, and then said, "I'm just going to kill myself I am so tired, and I can't keep doing this any longer: I'm going to blow my brains out " Ms LeCureux asked if the caller had a gun; the caller said that she did not but wished she did Ms LeCureux told the caller to breathe deeply and asked her again what was happening. Ms. LeCureux also emailed her supervisors noting the need for urgent help for a suicidal caller. Calmly keeping the caller engaged on the line, Ms LeCureux got the caller's name and location and emailed the information to her supervisors, who then notified local police. One of the Call Center supervisors then emailed Ms. LeCureux that local police were in the vicinity of the caller's home and approaching the residence Ms LeCureux heard the knock on the caller's door, heard the police officer identifying himself and asking the caller what was going on. The caller then disconnected the call. During the 40-minute call, LeCureux kept the caller engaged, got the caller's name and location, and worked with supervisors to notify local police. Thanks to LeCureaux's quick thinking and her ability to remain calm, the caller in crisis received swift and safe assistance With no regard for her own safety, Ms LeCureux went above and beyond the call of duty The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Consumer Affairs Program Technician III Abby LeCureux

Louis C. Lee

Hunter-Trapper

California Department of Food and Agriculture

1/30/1968

Special Act Award (Gold)

In a vacant building adjacent to his home in Boulder Creek, Mr Lee heard an explosion followed by a boy's scream Unable to see inside the building because of the dense smoke, Mr. Lee entered on his hands and knees, located the 13 year old boy by his cries and carried him outside. Mr. Lee smothered fire from the youth's face and clothing Mr Lee reentered the burning building to search for two other boys he had seen earlier playing nearby He carefully searched the building and then left to aid and comfort the injured boy until the ambulance arrived. When fireman reached the scene, they were unable to enter the building because of the choking smoke

George W. Leetch

State Park Ranger

Department of Parks and Recreation

4/8/1968

Special Act Award (Gold)

On Apri 8, 1968, State Park Ranger George Leetch was notified of an earthquake in the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park at Sp it Mountain Gorge. At the time of the earthquake nine families were camped at Sp it Mountain, a two mile long canyon with sheer cong omerate rock walls ranging from 300 to 400 feet high Rea izing the potential danger to the campers, Ranger Leetch immediately went into the gorge and started directing families away from the area. The earthquake caused huge boulders to loosen and crash down the mountainside, smashing vehicles and b ocking the exit Visibility was almost zero The campers were confused, some were hysterica Whi e Ranger Leetch was in the gorge trying to reassure the campers, an aftershock caused more boulders to fall and added to the confusion With the earth sti trembling and despite imminent danger to his own safety and ife, Ranger George Leetch calmed the people and successfully led them all to safety

Nicholas M. Legaspi

Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/3/1998

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Nicholas M Legaspi, on December 3, 1998, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at risk to his personal safety when he pulled a semiconscious driver out of a burning vehicle, which had collided into a concrete wall. At approximately 7:55 p.m., Officer Legaspi was off duty traveling eastbound on State Route 30 when he observed a vehicle driven by Mr. Steve Marrone, who was driving under the influence of alcohol, collide into the center divider on the westbound side of the freeway. The vehicle continued to slide along the center divider wall for 15 feet with sparks flashing from the impact. The vehicle pulled away from the wall and stopped, with smoke emitting from the damaged front end. Officer Legaspi exited the freeway and drove back to the collision scene where he observed the damaged vehicle in the center divider, partially straddling the number one lane. Officer Legaspi noticed flames coming out of the engine compartment of Mr. Marrone's vehicle. He approached the vehicle from the driver's side and saw the driver and passenger seats were empty. The interior was dark and filling with smoke. Officer Legaspi shouted into the car to see if anyone was inside. At this time he heard a moan. He was able to open the right passenger door where he discovered Mr. Marrone's head and torso protruding from underneath the dashboard. Mr. Marrone's hips and legs were pinned underneath the dashboard. When Officer Legaspi asked Mr. Marrone if he could move and possibly get out of the vehicle, Mr. Marrone did not answer. The fire was now moving from the engine compartment towards the front of the windshield. Mr. Marrone was unable to free himself. Officer Legaspi grabbed Mr. Marrone's arms and pulled, but was unable to free him. Due to Mr. Marrone's impaired level of consciousness and the small working space in the vehicle, Officer Legaspi was having difficulty removing him from the burning vehicle. Officer Legaspi continued to work to free Mr. Marrone and was able to bring most of his body away from the dashboard, however, his ankles and feet were still pinned by the dashboard. With the fire now burning the interior of the vehicle, Officer Legaspi untangled Mr. Marrone's feet from the dashboard. He then pulled Mr. Marrone away from the nearly engulfed car and moved him to the center divider approximately 30 feet behind the vehicle. By this time, the passenger compartment was completely consumed by the fire.

Albert A. LeHoullier

California State Police Officer

Department of General Services

6/25/1994

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 11 50 pm, while on patro duty in a State Po ice vehic e along the California Aqueduct in San Bernardino County, Officer LeHoullier responded to the nearby scene of a wild land fire which was threatening citizens in the Green Road area of Pinon Hi s Officer LeHoullier was asked by a United States Forest Service Batta ion Chief to evacuate residents on Green Road. His immediate evacuation response was crediting with saving the lives of a husband and wife just minutes before their home exploded from the fire's intensity. After evacuating the couple from the path of the firestorm, Officer LeHou ier became caught in the firestorm. A fire department air tanker dropped its load of fire retardant on his vehicle and the surrounding fire, allowing him a narrow path of escape. Moments later, his vehicle burst into flames

Lynne Lenell

Firefighter I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

8/1/1997

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 1, 1997 at approximately 2:00 p.m. Chief Clayton, Incident Commander (I.C.) assigned Engine 3381 and its crew, along with Chief Story, to respond to an arson fire near Lake Wohlford, Escondido. The CDF crew of Engine 3381, Fire Captain Mike Newell, and Firefighter-I Lynne Lenell and Firefighter-I Andy McDaniel responded to the fire to assist with the rescue of the Melvin family, and performed extraordinary acts of heroism at great risk to their personal safety and lives. The fire spread rapidly through heavy brush and up steep canyons, threatening numerous civilians and their property. The fire destroyed 11 dwellings, 20 - 30 other structures and approximately 30 vehicles. After a quick perusal of the area, it was discovered by I.C. Clayton that several property owners needed to be evacuated immediately. I.C. Clayton was notified by a civilian that the Melvin family was still trapped in the fire area. By this time the fire had developed into a fire storm with flames in excess of 50 feet high. The civilian knew the location of the Melvin family and was placed in Chief Story's vehicle. I.C. Clayton, Chief Story, the civilian, Captain Clay Howe (BLM), Engine 3381 and crew headed into the fire storm. Burning and arching power lines were falling as they drove through the fire. Flame and smoke conditions obscured the road bringing visibility to zero, which presented an immediate life-threatening situation. Direct air drops were ordered on the three vehicles, but had little effect due to poor visibility and turbulent wind conditions. The rescue team reached the Melvin family just before the fire reached their location. Engine 3381 and crew was left to protect the structure while the Melvin family was placed in I.C. Clayton's vehicle and driven back through a second wall of fire to safety. Despite perilous conditions and the possibility of being swept into the fire storm, the actions of Fire Firefighter Lynne Lenell stand as testimony to the quality and courage of the everyday CDF firefighter.

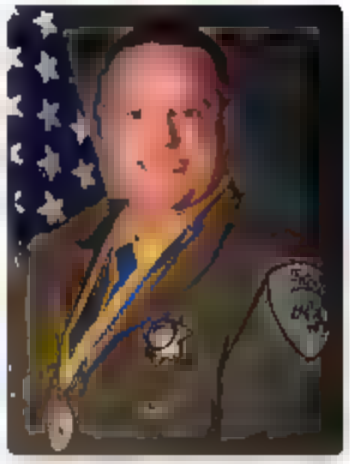
Steven Lewis

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/14/2013

Special Service Award (Silver)



On May 14, 2013, at approximately 3:33 p.m., California Highway Patrol Officer Steven Lewis responded to a traffic collision in Mariposa County where a vehicle went off the roadway, down a steep embankment overturned and caught fire. The driver was ejected and the fire quickly ignited the surrounding brush. Officer Lewis arrived on scene and saw the driver lying face down in the grass, his hair and clothing on fire. Officer Lewis immediately ran back to his patrol vehicle, grabbed the fire extinguisher, and worked his way down to the driver. When he reached the man, Officer Lewis immediately extinguished the flames on his body and saw he was alive. Officer Lewis emptied the rest of his fire extinguisher on the surrounding flames, to no avail. The brushfire was growing and a portable gasoline container lay nearby, so Officer Lewis grabbed the man's ankles and began pulling him away. There was a loud explosion and the surrounding trees became engulfed in flames. Thick smoke filled the air, making it difficult to see or breathe. Officer Lewis, with the assistance of other officers who were on the scene, carried the driver to the embankment where he was secured to a backboard, carried up, and transported to the hospital. Despite the heroic actions of the officers, the man later succumbed to his injuries.

Jose J. Linares

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

12/22/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 22, 2010, at approximately 6:30 a.m. Caltrans Equipment Operator II Jose J. Linares began his storm patrol shift on State Route 330 in the San Bernardino Mountains. The route was closed at approximately 3:00 a.m. that morning due to major storm damage and roadway collapse. Heavy rains had already caused road failure at several locations along the route and there were numerous mud and rock slides. Mr. Linares was asked to assist the Running Springs Fire Department, they were trying to reach a property owner in the lower section of Route 330 who had suffered devastating flood damage to his property and needed help rescuing an injured horse trapped inside a collapsed barn. Mr. Linares drove a loader to meet the firefighters and began clearing the roadway for their equipment. It became apparent that the property was unreachable with the vehicles, so Mr. Linares dug a path for them to access the residence on foot, escorted them there, and then assisted with the horse rescue. Once the rescue was complete, Mr. Linares continued to clear a path for the fire personnel for three hours, despite the threat of mudslides and boulders falling on the roadway

Gregory K. Linden

Caltrans Electrician I

Department of Transportation

6/14/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 8:15 a.m. on June 14, 2008, California Department of Transportation Electrician, Gregory A. Linden, and two co-workers responded to an emergency request to replace a damaged ramp meter signal pole on the Great Mall Parkway onramp to Interstate 880 in Milpitas. While hoisting the signal pole from the back of a truck, a hydraulic line on the hoist broke causing the pole to fall in the direction of his co-worker who was reaching in the back of his truck for tools and unaware of the danger. Mr. Linden realized if he did not react quickly, his co-worker would be crushed. Despite the great personal risk and the fact that hydraulic oil was everywhere, he reacted by knocking the 300-pound pole away from his co-worker. As a result of Mr. Linden's quick and selfless actions, the pole missed his co-worker, saving him from serious injury or possible death.

Bryan T. Little

Backcountry Trails Camp Supervisor

California Conservation Corps

8/26/1996

Special Service Award (Silver)

At approximately 4:15 p.m. while a father and his two young sons, ages 10 and 8, were camping in the remote backcountry at McGee Lake in Sequoia Kings Canyon National Park, his ten year old son fell, hitting his head near his eyebrow. The fall resulted in a depressed skull fracture and a created a three inch wound on his forehead down to the bone. His father knew he needed help and had to find it quickly to save his son's life. He hiked over the ridge to Sapphire Lake where he had seen tents the week before. Upon hearing what happened to the man's son, Backcountry Trails Camp Supervisor Bryan Little sprinted 600 feet over slippery rocks and steep slopes to the top of the ridge in an attempt to contact the Park Dispatcher on the radio. With no trail to the ridge top and only Mr. Little's experience, skill and common sense to guide him, this was a test of human strength and endurance. His starting point at Sapphire Lake was 11,000 feet. For most humans it takes great effort to stand upright in such thin air, let alone sprint to a distance ridge top. Mr. Little called Dispatch for a medical evacuation and then continued to the site to attend to the boy, approximately 45 minutes from camp. Once Mr. Little reached the boy, he checked his vital signs, kept everyone calm and called back into Park Dispatch, passing the boy's vital signs to the hospital and relaying the exact location with such assurance that the CHP helicopter pilot was willing to risk a rescue mission despite approaching darkness. Fortunately, the daylight lasted just long enough to complete the rescue. The 11 year old boy survived.

Ray Richard Little

State Forest Ranger II

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

12/2/1973

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 2, 1973, In the late afternoon, State Forest Ranger Ray Richard Little heard a low-flying airplane pass over his home at the Growlersburg Conservation Camp near Georgetown, El Dorado County. Recognizing by the sound of the aircraft's engine that it was in serious trouble and might not reach the local airport, he got into his car and headed for the landing strip about a mile away. Seconds later he spotted a fire in the distance on a tree-and brush-covered slope and, suspecting the crippled plane was the cause, headed for the scene. There he found the wreckage of the single-engine, magnesium construction craft burning intensely, and saw that the gasoline from one of the wing tanks had ruptured when the plane smashed into the trees. A man hung limply from his seatbelt. Ray Little, both an experienced pilot and fireman, fully cognizant of the hazards to which he was exposing himself, dared to enter the mass of flames where he discovered a middle-aged woman entangled in the ruins outside the cockpit area. He was able to remove the woman from the fire but the now-raging inferno prevented him from returning for the man or other possible victims within the plane. He then radioed for assistance. It was later determined the pilot of the plane and his lady passenger died of injuries suffered in the crash immediately upon impact. State Forest Ranger Ray Richard Little performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his own safety and life in attempting to save the lives of the victims.

Timothy Little

Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

9/12/2015

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 12, 2015, at approximately 3:00 p m., Ca ifornia Department of Fish and Wildlife Warden Timothy Little was working as a safety patrol in the town of Cobb as he and other first responders scramb ed to evacuate or assist residents during the Valley Fire As the fire began to consume the sma town of Cobb, an emergency call went out about an e der y woman trapped in her home and in need of immediate rescue Hearing radio calls from other rescue personnel saying they were unable to respond because of fire and debris in the roadway, Warden Little immediately headed towards the woman's home. Driving his patrol vehic e through raging flames and burning road hazards, Warden Litt e found the house and entered the home where he found an elderly woman trapped with her 11-month old granddaughter Warden Little rescued both the woman and child, getting them out of their home safely and on the road just minutes before fire incinerated her home. Shortly afterwards, Warden Little learned that another e der y woman was trapped in her house and needed serious medical attention He also earned that no medical transport crews would be able to make it there in time, so once again Warden Little raced to provide aid After locating the house, he found the woman trapped on the second floor, unable to walk. Warden Litt e carried her down a flight of stairs to a waiting vehicle and escorted them to the hospita Warden Little then continued to assist in other searches

Communications Operator

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

12/18/2020

Special Service Award (Silver)

On December 18, 2020, while traveling home from a 12-hour duty shift at the Emergency Communications Center in San Bernardino, CA, off-duty Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Communications Operator Barbara Loescher found herself at the scene of a major traffic collision in Crestline, CA There were two vehicles, one of which was on fire, the other which contained an unconscious passenger Ms Loescher began administering cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), after determining the unconscious passenger was not breathing, until on-duty first responders arrived at scene. The driver of the other vehicle attempted to flee the scene Ms Loescher leveraged her experience as a former California Highway Patrol Communications Operator to successfully detain the driver until police officers arrived With no regard for her own safety, Ms Loescher went above and beyond the call of duty The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Communications Operator Barbara Loescher.

Jason Lofton

Caltrans Highway Maintenance Worker

Department of Transportation

12/19/2021

Special Service Award (Silver)

During the night of December 19, 2021, Caltrans Landscape Maintenance Workers Jason Lofton and Brian Rubalcava were checking for rocks in the roadway, guardrail damage and downed signs following a winter storm. Around 11:30 p.m., while traveling on State Route 263, they noticed what appeared to be tire tracks leading off the roadway and stopped to investigate. Mr. Lofton saw vehicle lights down the side of the embankment and heard someone calling for help. He went over the steep embankment to investigate while Mr. Rubalcava turned on their truck's flashers and radioed dispatch. Mr. Lofton located a man in a large bush below the vehicle and a woman hanging on to the door of the vehicle, both freezing and in pain from what appeared to be major injuries. Mr. Lofton and Mr. Rubalcava removed their jackets and covered the victims in an effort to keep them warm. Among the blood, gas and debris from the wreckage, Mr. Lofton and Mr. Rubalcava provided aid to the victims until emergency personnel arrived. Mr. Rubalcava then began removing brush, loose rocks and material so emergency crews could maneuver down the embankment. Due to extremely cold temperatures, the remote location of the incident and serious injuries, both victims would likely not have survived had it not been for Mr. Lofton and Mr. Rubalcava's situational awareness, attentiveness and selfless actions performed at personal risk to their safety. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation CalTrans Landscape Maintenance Worker Jason Lofton for his act of heroism extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Neil Logan

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

12/31/1984

Special Act Award (Gold)

Fire Captain Neil Logan, Department of Forestry, On December 31, 1984, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his personal safety while rescuing a woman from a submerged sports car which had plunged into the South Fork of the Eel River near Phillipsville on State Highway 254. While off duty Captain Logan witnessed, from his front yard, a high speed vehicle slide several feet and flip end-over-end into the Eel River. Instructing members of his family to notify the proper authorities, he ran to the river to see if he could be of assistance. Upon reaching the edge of the rain swollen river, Captain Logan saw man swimming away from the submerged vehicle. Upon seeing Captain Logan, he yelled "Get my wife, she is still in the car"! Captain Logan immediately removed his boots and dove into the frigid water. Captain Logan was pushed downstream by the current and had to swim approximately 40' back up stream to reach the vehicle. Upon reaching the vehicle, he dove under water and going by feel only, due to murky water, he was able to locate the limp body of the female passenger. Removing her from the passenger compartment, he managed to get her on the hood of the vehicle. By this time she had turned blue due to lack of oxygen and he held her head out of the water until she began breathing. Captain Logan then took her to shore by swimming and finally walking through the swift current. Upon reaching the river bank, he administered first aid to both victims until the ambulance crew arrived

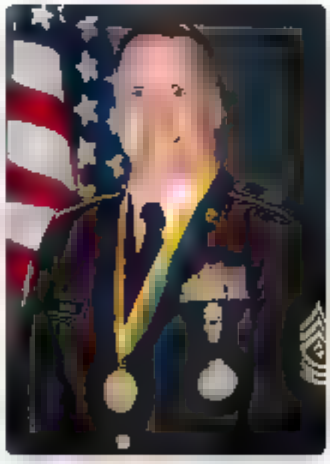
Michael J. Long

Sergeant First Class, Recruiting and Retention Battalion, California National Guard

California Military Department

12/30/2015

Special Act Award (Gold)



On December 30, 2015, at 8:00 a.m., Sergeant First Class Michael J. Long witnessed a vehicle run off the road and launch into frigid waters. Without hesitation, Sergeant First Class Long stopped his vehicle, jumped a fence, and ran to help the trapped driver. With the assistance of a retired Airman and a California Highway Patrol Officer, Sergeant First Class Long entered the water as the car began to sink and, without regard for his own safety, wedged his knees under the rear of the car to keep the vehicle from sinking while the Highway Patrol Officer broke the window to extract the trapped driver. Sergeant First Class Long then swam the driver ashore and rendered first aid until the ambulance arrived. Due to Sergeant First Class Long's swift actions, the driver did not sustain any serious injuries. His actions demonstrate unwavering courage and reflect great credit upon himself, the California Military Department and the State of California

David Longstreth

Engineering Geologist

Department of Conservation

4/28/2006

Special Act Award (Gold)

On April 28, 2006, Dave Longstreth, an Engineering Geologist with the California Department of Conservation and Boy Scout Leader for Ukiah-based Troop 75, was searching for a parking space after dropping off members of his Boy Scout Troop for a weekend "camporee" at Lake Mendocino. While parking, he heard a commotion and saw a vehicle in the lake about 100 feet offshore with two people inside. He realized he had to take action. As a lifelong body surfer, a certified Scuba diver for nearly 30 years, and with experience in free diving for abalone in the chilly, North Coast waters, he dove into the lake and quickly swam to the vehicle. Two men already in the water had succeeded in freeing the driver from the vehicle. Mr. Longstreth headed for the passenger side of the car to help the woman who seemed "frozen with fear." Just as Mr. Longstreth reached the passenger window, the water filled the car to its tipping point and the car started to sink. As directed by Mr. Longstreth, the woman grabbed his arms and they both went under. Her buoyancy and the last rush of air helped to push her out of the window. Mr. Longstreth guided her up about eight feet to the surface and then brought her to shore then swam back out to bring in the husband, who was treading water with his two rescuers. After being assured that no one else was in the car, Mr. Longstreth saw a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers emergency vehicle and knew they were in good hands. He left the scene without learning the names of the people he had saved, nor did they learn his. It was only months later that word about his rescue finally surfaced. Mr. Longstreth showed incredible resolve and professionalism in the face of danger and he didn't hesitate to respond and assist in the rescue of these two individuals.

Nicholas Lopes

Forestry Fire Pilot

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/26/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 26, 2018, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Forestry Fire Pilot Nicholas Lopes responded to the Carr Fire. He battled the fire from the air, using his helicopter to drop water onto the flames. Just before 6:00 p m , Bulldozer Operator Don Smith made contact by radio and requested water drops. The fire had jumped over the bulldozer line that he had been working, trapping him. Pilot Lopes immediately began making numerous water drops through the smoke in the bulldozer's last known location in an effort to stave off the flames and save Mr Smith's life. Through heavy smoke, wind and rapidly growing fire activity, Pilot Lopes made approximately 21 trips, dropping an estimated 5,000 gallons of water on the area These drops persisted over twenty minutes, until Pilot Lopes was forced to land inside the fire area at the base of Spring Creek Dam when a temperature warning light came in his helicopter. Pilot Lopes returned to his mission after only twenty minutes of down time and continued the water drops. He risked his life by returning to the air despite the warning light, which indicated that the air temperatures outside were high enough to dangerously decrease the helicopter's performance and made the challenging conditions even more perilous Tragically, Bulldozer Operator Don Smith perished in the fire despite the heroic efforts of Pilot Lopes With no regard for his own safety, Pilot Lopes went above and beyond the call of duty The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Forestry Fire Pilot Nicholas Lopes

Brian Lopez

Officer

Department of Justice

11/1/2013

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On November 1, 2013, a lone gunman walked into Terminal 3 of the Los Angeles International airport and opened fire with a semi-automatic assault rifle, killing one TSA officer and wounding seven civilians. The initial call to Airport Police dispatch was received within 60 seconds of the shooting. Los Angeles Airport Police Sergeant Steve Zouzounis acknowledged the call and was on scene just 30 seconds later, and joined immediately by five Airport Police officers responding to the shooting: David Lalicker, Brian Lopez, Robert Pedregon, Raymond Woods and Daniel Yu.

Trying to determine possible accomplices among the hundreds of passengers, the six officers assumed a diamond shaped "active shooter formation" and advanced on the gunman. Determining the assailant was acting alone, the officers split into two groups of three and entered from opposite ends of the concourse the shooter was located. The officers confronted him and exchanged gun fire. Due to the six officer's quick and decisive actions, the shooter was neutralized and taken into custody within four minutes after the initial "shots fired" radio call. Paramedics transported the perpetrator to a local hospital where he was treated for his injuries. The actions of these officers prevented the shooter from further injuring or fatally wounding hundreds of airport personnel and travelers.

Larry Lopez

Detective

Department of Justice

2/12/2013

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On February 12, 2013 a team of deputies had tracked fugitive Christopher Dorner to cabin in the snowy Angeles Oak terrain. Charged with home invasion, Dorner had spent the previous week avoiding capture and exchanging fire with law enforcement, killing on Riverside Police officer Barricaded in the cabin, Dorner shot two more deputies who'd been approaching the cabin. After witnessing Dorner shoot two more deputies who'd been approaching the cabin, deputies Musella, Lopez, and Ross shot suppressing fire to prevent Dorner from further shooting at the downed men. Musella and Ross deployed smoke canisters to conceal the downed deputies. To gain tactical advantage, Musella ran 50 yards in the open to a nearby building while Lopez and Ross rushed from cover to drag the down officers to safety Tragically one of the wounded officers succumbed to his injuries and died However, the other deputy survived and has fully recovered and returned to work.

Leo Lopez

Sergeant

Other

2/5/2010

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

Homicide detectives from the Fresno County Sheriff's Office, including safety personnel from allied agencies in the town of Minkler, attempted to serve a search warrant. The search warrant team, comprised of Detectives Mark Chapman, Mark Eaton, Joe Wahlenmaier and Robert McEwen, approached the house. The other personnel surrounded the perimeter of the home. The team knocked and announced their presence, and demanded entry several times. The team then broke down an exterior porch door to gain entry, however, they discovered another locked door. Detectives again announced their presence and demanded entry, yet the suspect refused. As Detective Wahlenmaier hit the door with a ram, the suspect, who was lying-in-wait, began shooting through the closed door. Detective Wahlenmaier was shot and immediately collapsed. Detective McEwen instinctively covered Detective Wahlenmaier with his own body, to protect him from further harm. As the gun battle ensued, Sergeant Lopez and Detective Toscano attempted for several minutes to pull Detective Wahlenmaier from the porch, however, his equipment caught on the door frame. Deputy Harris returned cover fire, allowing other deputies to free Detective Wahlenmaier while the gunfire continued. Deputy Harris sustained an injury to his right eye and the right side of his face from a fragmented bullet fired by the suspect. Deputy Harris continued to return cover fire. As the gun battle continued, it was learned that Fresno County Sheriff's Detective Wahlenmaier was mortally wounded. An additional tragedy was the loss of Reedley Police Officer Javier Bejar who was shot and killed by the suspect while aiding sheriff deputies, as you will hear in the next citation. The standoff ultimately ended when the suspect took his own life.

Roberto Lopez

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

5/26/2022

Special Act Award (Gold)

While returning to the Caltrans Boulevard Maintenance Station around 11:30 a.m. on May 26, 2022, Caltrans employee Desok Urbeck had an accident involving a cargo truck and pull broom and ended up at the bottom of a ravine in the center median of Interstate 8. Caltrans Equipment Operator II Roberto Lopez was following behind Mr. Urbeck and witnessed the accident. The truck and pull broom immediately caught fire. Without hesitation, Mr. Lopez rushed down the ravine to help. Mr. Urbeck was trapped inside the truck with both doors jammed. Surrounded by smoke and flames, Mr. Lopez was finally able to pull Mr. Urbeck out of the truck through the driver's side window. Together, they crawled over rocks and boulders to a safe distance away from the fire as the truck became fully engulfed directly behind them. Mr. Lopez then relentlessly continued to crawl and climb while pulling Mr. Urbeck to safety up the ravine. They finally reached the top with the help of two unknown individuals for the last few feet. Mr. Lopez remained with Mr. Urbeck until emergency personnel arrived. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation Equipment Operator II Roberto Lopez for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

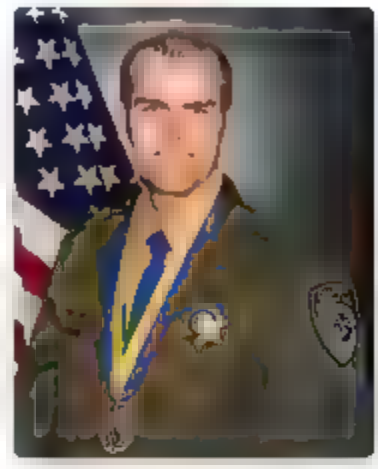
Whitney Lowe

Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/8/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)



On October 8, 2017, at 9:52 p.m., California Highway Patro Officers Whitney Lowe and Pete Gavitte responded to a rapidly growing fire in the At as Peak area of Napa County Approximate y 20 minutes later, their helicopter arrived on scene and observed the

smoke-fi ed air, fa en trees and downed power ines across multiple roadways. Trapped residents had itt e time before the approaching fire wou d overcome them. Officer Gavitte and Officer Lowe recognized the only escape for these residents would be by helicopter rescue Despite the firestorm's wind gusts in excess of 70 mi es per hour, and extreme downdrafts and updrafts, they made the decision to fly into the heavy smoke and and near the vehicles attempting to exit the area As they landed, a trapped resident ran to the helicopter and pleaded to the officers to take his son and fami y members to safety Although the he icopter on y fit four adults at a time, Officer Lowe and Officer Gavitte continuously flew trapped residents to safety. Officer Gavitte stated that, "the intense windy conditions fe t ike a hurricane," but he was ab e to maintain control of the helicopter. The Officers faced grueling and physica y demanding conditions for more than six continuous hours as they conducted dangerous flights behind the fire line while smoke, ash, and embers b ew around them in complete darkness. Also, to maximize rescue operations, Officers Lowe and Gavitte utilized hot refue ing, which entai s fue ing the helicopter whi e the engine is running. This type of refueling elevates the danger, as it requires specia training and equipment, and can be disastrous if done incorrectly. Aeria surve ance after the night of the rescues showed the area where the rescue operations were conducted had been completely overrun by the fire. The At as Fire burned more than 50 000 acres and destroyed over 400 structures. With no regard to his own safety, Officer Lowe went above and beyond the ca of duty, saving 26 ives and two dogs. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Va or to Ca ifornia Highway Patro Officer Whitney Lowe

Felipe Lugo, Jr.

Sargeant

California Highway Patrol

12/18/1999

Special Service Award (Silver)

On December 18, 1999, at 4:15 p.m. the Orange County Communications Center received numerous cellular telephone calls of a possible suicide attempt. The woman, according to callers, was sitting on a ledge and hanging over the side of the transition overpass from northbound Interstate 5 to northbound State Route 73. Officer Ricardo Baeza, the first officer to arrive on the scene, observed the woman sitting on the northbound center divider concrete barrier ledge with her legs hanging over the side and her hands down by her sides as if to use them to push herself off of the wall. It appeared to Officer Baeza that the woman was preparing to jump onto the roadway below, a distance of approximately 80 feet. Officer Baeza was able to position himself on the southbound State Route 73 center divider, directly across from the woman, and was attempting to persuade her from jumping. The woman was visibly upset, crying and yelling that she no longer wanted to live. Officer Andrew Alvarez also responded to the scene and positioned himself on the northbound side, south of the distraught woman. As Officer Baeza continued to communicate with the woman and to distract her, Officer Alvarez approached her from the opposite side. He stopped when the woman saw him approaching and continued to scream that she did not want to live and she was going to jump. Sergeant Felipe Lugo, Jr. arriving on the scene, also positioned himself north of the woman opposite Officer Alvarez. Officer Alvarez was able to direct the woman's attention to himself while Sergeant Lugo rushed toward the woman grabbing and pulling her off of the wall and onto the roadway. Officers Baeza, Alvarez, and Sergeant Lugo all descended upon the woman, and after a brief struggle, took her into protective custody.

Nicholas Macias

Caltrans Highway Maintenance Worker

Department of Transportation

8/3/2022

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the morning of August 3, 2022, Highway Maintenance Worker Nicholas Macias and Equipment Operator II Robert Hernandez were on duty when they noticed a sedan had crashed into a tree while exiting Highway 99. Flames were emitting from its engine compartment. The two skillfully maneuvered their Caltrans vehicle up the off-ramp, blocked the lane and started traffic control to protect the crashed vehicle and pedestrians, who were near the scene, from the vehicles exiting the highway. Noticing the driver was still in the vehicle and recognizing the danger the fire posed to the driver, citizens on foot, and other motorists, Mr. Macias quickly retrieved a fire extinguisher, ran towards the crash, and successfully extinguished the fire before the sedan was fully engulfed, while Mr. Hernandez maintained traffic control and kept people safely back. With the fire successfully extinguished, the trapped and injured driver was safely extracted. Facing great personal risk, the actions of Mr. Macias and Mr. Hernandez helped save the life of the injured driver and prevented potential injuries to pedestrians and other motorists. The State of California takes great pride in presenting a Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation Equipment Operator II Robert Hernandez for his act of heroism extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Robert "Bob" MacKenzie

Transportation Surveyor

Department of Transportation

11/30/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of November 30, 2009, while traveling home on Highway 88 near Kirkwood, Bob MacKenzie and his wife Elyse came upon a man waving his arms in the air and yelling that a car had just crashed over the embankment. Mr. MacKenzie parked his car and without hesitation went over the guardrail and down a slippery, snow covered, broken rock mountainside About 100 feet down, he found an elderly man standing next to an overturned and very unstable station wagon lying on its right side. Mr. MacKenzie discovered the man's wife was trapped in the front seat with one of her arms pinned under the right front windshield pillar frame. While speaking to the woman Mr. MacKenzie noticed the ignition was still on and he smelled gasoline. Mr. MacKenzie could see a five gallon gasoline can in the car He carefully entered the vehicle, shut the car off and removed the gas can, carrying it away from the vehicle to prevent an explosion. Mr. MacKenzie then attempted to dig the woman's arm out from under the car but was unsuccessful and concerned that the unstable car could move and cause further injury to the woman so he shifted his efforts to making her comfortable and treating her for shock With the temperature about 32 degrees, Mr. MacKenzie covered the woman with his jacket to keep her warm and covered her exposed hand with a snow boot he had found in the car. He then pushed rocks under the car to ensure the vehicle was stabilized and would not roll or slide down the embankment causing further injury to the woman or himself. He then proceeded to lie down on the snow-covered ground next to her continuing to talk with her for almost 20 minutes until rescuers could reach the scene. When the rescuers arrived Mr. Mackenzie gave them details of the woman's situation, allowing them to make only one rope trip down the steep embankment with the proper tools and first aid supplies After approximately an hour, the woman was extricated from the vehicle, taken to a waiting ambulance, and subsequently air lifted to a Reno hospital. She spent several days in the hospital and is still recovering from the accident. Mr. MacKenzie's actions, without regard for his own safety, prevented further injuries and possibly saved the woman's life

The State of California takes great pride in presenting to Bob MacKenzie, this Gold Medal of Valor, for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

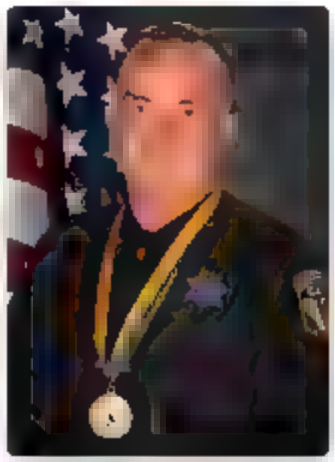
Doug Mackey

Fire Captain Specialist

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

12/21/2014

Special Act Award (Gold)



On December 21, 2014, at approximately 10:30 a.m., California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Specialist Doug Mackey was on routine patrol in Auburn when he heard a call from the Placer County Sheriff's office requesting additional assistance as they had just received a report of gunfire in a residential neighborhood. Captain Mackey responded to the call and learned that a lone gunman was holed up inside his house, shooting at officers and neighboring homes. Captain Mackey and other officers put up a perimeter around the homes and remained there as the gunman continued to shoot. The Placer County Sheriff's Special Enforcement Team (SET) arrived on the scene and noticed the suspect's garage was adjacent to the roof of a neighboring house. A SET team member climbed onto the neighbor's roof, attempting to release tear gas into the roof vents of the suspect's house. The suspect responded by setting his garage on fire and the neighboring home started to burn, trapping the deputy on the roof. With little time to spare, and in the line of fire, Captain Mackey and an Auburn police officer ran out into the open carrying a ladder and rescued the deputy from the burning roof. Fortunately, no one was injured. After the rescue, Captain Mackey and the police officer checked the other homes in the neighborhood for residents. They found an elderly couple in one of the homes and, while providing cover, helped them escape out the back of their house.

Jeff F. Madeira

Data Processing Manager I

Franchise Tax Board

1/6/2008

Special Service Award (Silver)

On January 6, 2008, at approximately 3:15 p.m., a woman and her 84-year old father were walking her pet Terrier and Chihuahua-mix dog, in their Citrus Heights neighborhood west of Birdcage Center. Suddenly, and without warning, a large aggressive dog attacked her small dog. When the woman tried to protect her dog the aggressive dog knocked her to the ground and savagely bit her hands and arms. Jeff Madeira, a Data Processing Manager at the Franchise Tax Board, saw the attack and got out of his car to help. He fought with the aggressive dog and managed to scare it away. He helped the bleeding woman, her father, and her wounded dog into his car and quickly drove them to their nearby home. Once there, the woman's husband immediately drove his wife to the hospital for medical treatment and the dog to a veterinary clinic. The woman sustained severe injuries and, even today, continues to suffer pain and numbness in her hands. Sadly, her dog died from his injuries a few hours after the vicious attack. In their haste to get medical attention, they failed to get Mr. Madeira's name. Following the incident, the family broadcast appeals over local newscasts and printed media, asking the "Good Samaritan" to come forward so that they could thank him in person. Jeff heard the appeals and met the family a week after the incident.

Stephen Sean Madrigal

Program Technician II

Covered California

12/24/2015

Special Service Award (Silver)

On December 24, 2015, around 6:00 p.m. Stephen Madriga and his wife, Rosalie, were heading home from work at the Covered California Service Center in Fresno They decided to stop at 7-Eleven to get a movie for their chi dren from the Redbox located there As they were .eaving they noticed a man punching another man who had stumbled onto the road and fa en down. It was dusk and drizzling and cars were driving around the man. Worried that he was going to be run over, Mr. Madrigal jumped out of the car and ran over and grabbed the assailant from behind in a bear hug. While restraining the assailant, Mr. Madrigal lost his footing on the wet pavement and fell backwards while still holding onto him While they were on the ground, the victim pulled out a knife and began stabbing the assailant who was on top of Mr. Madrigal. Mr. Madrigal was inadvertently stabbed during the chaos but remained calm. He tried to reason with the man holding the knife, telling him that whatever they were fighting about was not worth spending his life in prison Shortly thereafter, the man dropped his knife and waited with Mr. Madrigal for the po ice to arrive. It wasn't until the fight had ended that Mr. Madrigal realized his thumb had been cut to the bone. Mr. Madrigal was transported to the hospital, where he received stitches to his thumb and was placed on antiviral medication for six months to treat the injuries for his selfless act. With no regard for his own safety, Mr Madrigal's heroic service saved two men involved in a street fight. The State of Ca ifornia takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to Covered Ca ifornia Program Technician II Stephen Madrigal.

Wesley J. Maehler

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/24/1990

Special Act Award (Gold)

State Traffic Officers Thomas R Greenstone and Wesley J Maehler, on December 24, 1990, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great persona risk to their own safety and life in the rescue of two adu t ma es from a burning pickup truck. At approximate y 3 30 a.m. Officers Greenstone and Maeh er were on routine patrol on Interstate 5 when they observed flames south of their location, near Camp Pend eton Marine Corps Base. Immediately responding to the location, the officers encountered a burning pickup truck with two unconscious adult ma es in the cab Officer Maehler got the fire extinguisher from the patrol car while Officer Greenstone ran to the right door of the truck The engine compartment was fu y enga fed in flames and ignited the surrounding vegetation along the left side of the truck into a six to ten foot wall of flames. Officer Greenstone opened the right door and located the passenger in the thick, dense smoke that filled the cab The passenger was extremely intoxicated and resisted Officer Greenstone' attempts to get him out of the truck. Officer Greenstone overcome the passenger's resistance and pulled him to safety as the dash and windshield area started to melt from the extreme heat and flames. Officer Maeh er then entered the cab, and located the unconscious driver slumped up against the driver's side door and dashboard He pulled the driver toward the passenger's door, but due to his arge size, the driver became stuck between the seat and steering wheel. After considerab e effort officer Maehler freed the drive and pulled him through the open door Both Officers Greenstone and Maeh er carried the sti unconscious driver to a safe distance away from the truck, which was now fully engulfed in flames.

Nhan Mai

Officer

California Highway Patrol

6/18/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 18, 2017, at approximately 2:51 p.m., Golden Gate Communications Center broadcasted a crash involving a box truck, which had crashed into a light pole and tree. California Highway Patrol Officer Michael Basile arrived on scene and found several occupants trapped inside the box truck with the driver and passenger doors jammed shut. Additionally, dry foliage, a tree, and the truck's tires were all on fire. California Highway Patrol Officer Nhan Mai and California Highway Patrol Sergeant Thomas Byington also arrived on scene and immediately began to assist with the situation. Sergeant Byington ran to assist Officer Basile, while Officer Mai retrieved a fire extinguisher from the patrol vehicle. Officer Mai attempted to put out the fire, but the fire extinguisher malfunctioned. Sergeant Byington advised the Golden Gate Communications Center that the truck was on fire and requested all available units to respond with fire extinguishers to the scene. Officer Mai rolled down the driver side window so the driver could climb out and walk away from the burning truck to safety. Officer Mai and Officer Basile attempted to enter the truck through the passenger side door to rescue the other passengers, but they were unable to pull the door open. Sergeant Byington assisted the officers and used his size and strength to help force open the passenger door. The cab was now full of smoke and visibility was low. Inside, one passenger was bleeding and pinned against the dash. Officer Basile reached into the cab and with the help of Sergeant Byington, freed the passenger and dragged him to safety. Officer Mai observed the front seat passenger reaching out for help but was unable to pull the passenger out on his own. Officer Basile returned to the truck to assist Officer Mai, and together, they were able to pull the passenger out to safety. Officer Mai then climbed into the truck and found another passenger unconscious, slumped over the center console, and trapped between the driver and passenger front seats. Officer Mai pushed the seat with his legs while Sergeant Byington and Officer Basile pulled on the seat from the outside. They were able to free the passenger and drag her to safety. Once again, Officer Mai entered the burning truck and found another passenger on the floorboard behind the driver's seat. The passenger was unable to move his leg, which was bleeding and pinned by various objects. Officer Mai began pushing the furniture and other items away to try and free the passenger. Officer Basile also entered the truck to help. The officers were able to pull the passenger out through the passenger side door and drag him to safety. All the passengers were successfully removed from the burning truck and received medical treatment. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Mai went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Nhan Mai.

Timothy Main

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

4/30/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire Captain Timothy Main and Fire Apparatus Engineer-Paramedic James Rajskup, performed an act of heroism at risk to their own personal safety when they entered a burning home upon receiving word from neighbors that a 98-year old woman was trapped inside and after a thorough search throughout the home under extreme dangerous fire conditions. On April 30, 2003, at 10 28 a m in the town of San Martin, Santa Clara County, Captain Main entered into the house from the rear door He moved through the kitchen to the hallway and down the hall to the first bedroom The search of the third bedroom was limited due to the extension of fire in the room Captain Main was retreating to the hallway near the kitchen when Paramedic Rajskup entered the kitchen and formulated a plan to search the residence a second time. As the temperature was increasing rapidly and the visibility was decreasing, they again started a right hand search from the kitchen hallway junction Upon entering the bedroom Captain Main located the victim on the floor under some blankets. He notified Paramedic Rajskup and that the victim was located and being removed to the rear of the building. The victim was treated including Captain Main and Paramedic Rajskup.

Erik Mallory

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/27/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 6 43 a m. on August 27, 2020, a private civilian airplane was departing from Benton Airpark and crashed just after take-off Sergeant Jeff Edgerton noticed from his office window that a private airplane was attempting to takeoff at an unusual altitude that was immediately apparent to him was not consistent with sustained flight. Sergeant Edgerton shouted to everyone in the office that a plane was about to crash and multiple employees exited the office towards the runway The airplane departed the runway complex and crashed into a steep, brush-filled ravine just north of Placer Street. Officer Mallory was one of the first officers out the door Officer Mallory, Officer Jeffery Hatcher, and Officer Eric Pohrman arrived within approximately 30 seconds of the crash. Lieutenant Michael Berry, Officer Mallory, Officer Pohrman, and Officer Hatcher arrived at the burning crash site and observed the first victim on the ground about 10 feet from the burning fuselage. While circling the aircraft, they came upon a second victim who had been thrown 20 feet from the aircraft and was actively on fire. Officer Pohrman utilized a patrol vehicle fire extinguisher to put out the fire on and around the second victim. Officer Mallory, Lieutenant Berry, and Officer Hatcher picked up the second victim and moved him away from the engulfed fuselage. After pulling the second victim to safety, Officer Mallory went back towards the fully engulfed wreckage, to assist the first victim The aircraft's onboard oxygen tank had caught fire and caused a large secondary explosion. Officer Pohrman and Officer Steve Weyand were successful in keeping the fire from engulfing the first victim, who was able to crawl 5 more feet from the intense heat of the wreckage. Sergeant Edgerton, Officer Pohrman, and Officer Hatcher were able to pull the second victim even further away from the burning aircraft and vegetation. Officer Mallory continued to search for additional survivors until it was determined that two remaining occupants that were trapped inside the aircraft had perished. Officer Mallory retrieved a backboard so the victims could be prepared for transport up the ravine. He assisted in carrying the injured victims up the steep embankment to the awaiting ambulances.

With no regard for his own safety, Officer Mallory went above and beyond the call of duty The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Erik Mallory.

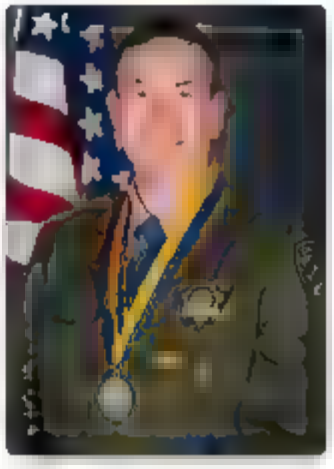
Kevin Lyn Maniord

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/29/2016

Special Service Award (Silver)



On January 29, 2016, at 4:05 p.m., California Highway Patrol Officer Kevin Maniord and Officer Andy Murrill, responded to a call of a traffic collision with an ambulance responding. Upon their arrival, they observed a man walking along the bank of Canyon Creek. The man stated he had lost control of his vehicle and it was upside down in Canyon Creek. He also stated his passenger was trapped in the vehicle. Without hesitation, Officer Maniord, Officer Murrill, and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Equipment Operator II James Anderson waded across approximately 20 feet of waist deep, swift moving, icy cold water, to the trapped woman's location. They observed her to be nearly unresponsive, bleeding profusely, confused, and exhibiting signs of hypothermia. Mr. Anderson cut the woman's seat belt, and with great effort while struggling against the strong current, Officers Maniord and Murrill, and Mr. Anderson extricated her from the vehicle and began to carry her across the creek. As they carried her across the creek, Mr. Anderson lost his footing on the rocky creek bed, fell into the water, and began to travel downstream. While maintaining control of the woman, Officers Maniord and Murrill, with help from Caltrans Equipment Operator II Kenneth Meyers, reached out and held onto Mr. Anderson, preventing him from being swept downstream. Mr. Meyers helped Mr. Anderson to his feet and out of the creek. The officers then carried the woman up the steep embankment and over the metal guardrail. Officer Maniord covered the woman in a blanket and placed her in the rear of a California Highway Patrol vehicle. Officers Maniord and Murrill provided medical treatment to the woman until relieved by CalFire personnel. As a result of this traffic collision, the woman suffered from hypothermia, a fractured right rib, and lacerations to her left leg and right arm.

Harold Mansur

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

11/2/1993

Special Act Award (Gold)

On November 2, 1993, Fire Captains Harold T. Mansur and Robert V. Martinez performed extraordinary acts of heroism at great personal risk to their own safety and lives. They initiated and helped 12 inmate/fire crew firefighters in the rescue of seven civilians trapped on a 200-foot-high ledge with a major fire descending upon them. On the Pacific Coast Highway at Malibu, at approximately 4:45 pm, a police officer with a megaphone told the victims to come off the hill even if they had to slide down. Only one young woman started down until her footing got too unsure and she froze. The others didn't try and appeared to be in a state of panic. Fire Captains Mansur and Martinez decided the only way to rescue these people would be to use a chair-formation rescue with a belay (secure a rope on a rock) procedure. FC Mansur grabbed a 100 foot rope and he and his lead inmate started up the hill. FC Mansur found no place to tie the rope so he tied it around his own waist, dug in and leaned back into the hill to establish the rope line. FC Martinez sent three inmates up after the young woman. Martinez then organized eight other inmates into a human chair to bring the victims down one at a time while he served as a lookout about 50 feet up the slope. When they got the young woman to the rope line and told her to slide down, she froze, and an inmate wrapped his arms around her and carried her down. When the other victims started down and the flames were getting very close, FC Mansur yelled to the inmates on top, "Get out now! There's no more time!" One of the crew turned to Mansur and framed in flames, held up one finger and yelled back, "There's one more." A developmentally disabled young man was found cowering under a burning bush and had to be wrestled away. Meanwhile, too many people below FC Mansur had grabbed the rope and it pulled him loose. A couple of those below Mansur grabbed and held the rope until he regained his footing. With flames no more than three to five feet behind them and spotting all around them, Fire Captains Mansur and Martinez made sure all personnel were going down and then joined them in sliding and tumbling to the highway. As soon as their boots hit the pavement, the whole slope on which they had just been negotiating ignited with 100-foot flames

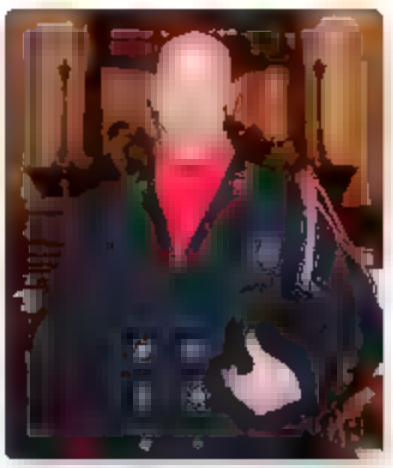
Dave Manzeck

Fire Engineer-Paramedic

Other

4/11/2010

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor



A 9-1-1 caller reported a vehicle upside down in the Walnut Creek flood channel with victims trapped inside and other victims possibly floating downstream. The Incident Commander immediately called additional units to positions along the canal who spotted two victims in the swift current. A California Highway Patrol helicopter and utility van also arrived with two rescue swimmers. While the helicopter crew began setting up their winch operation, a victim went over a low head dam. Rescuers breached the fence and tossed several throw bags to the victim who was now caught in the boil line. The helicopter attempted to lower a rescue ring to the victim without success. The helicopter then lowered Fire Engineer/Paramedic Manzeck on a hoist (via a flotation cinch ring) to an area between the face of the dam and the boil line where he was able to reach the victim under water. He then pushed the victim downstream in order to get her out of the boil. The helicopter hoisted Manzeck, still attached to the rescue collar, out of the water and re-lowered him just upstream of the victim who was now unconscious. He lifted the victim out of the water with one arm, dislocating his shoulder and took her to shore. The 74-year-old victim was transported by ambulance to a local hospital. She eventually regained consciousness, and went home a few days later.

Jeremy Maraviov

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

12/26/2021

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the night of December 26, 2021, Caltrans Equipment Operator II Scott Davidson was on storm patrol driving south on Highway 3 in Trinity County through heavy snowfall. Despite limited visibility he noticed tire tracks going over an embankment. Mr. Davidson exited his vehicle to further investigate and located a truck with a young male driver pinned inside. He immediately notified dispatch and proceeded to break the passenger window to gain access to the young man who was freezing and going in and out of consciousness. Mr. Davidson covered him with his own clothes and talked to the young man to keep him alert as he was not sure of the extent of his injuries. A short time later, Caltrans Equipment Operator IIs Jeremy Maraviov and Trevor Gipson arrived on scene to help. The three took turns aiding the young man and providing what clothing they had to keep him warm, while also clearing snow and removing portions of the vehicle to clear a path for emergency personnel. After a period of time, CAL FIRE personnel arrived, and Mr. Davidson suggested they attach a chain from his four-yard vehicle to the crashed vehicle to secure it so that CAL FIRE could safely extract the driver. They then deployed flares while Mr. Maraviov and Mr. Gipson shoveled steps out to help the first responders. They also helped the fire crew with any tools and supplies needed, and once the injured driver was extracted, they assisted the first responders with getting him up the embankment and safely into the ambulance. Due to extremely cold temperatures, remote location and injuries sustained, the young man likely would not have survived had it not been for the attentiveness and selfless actions performed by Mr. Maraviov, Mr. Gipson, and Mr. Davidson. Adding to their selflessness, none of the three reported their heroic acts to their supervisors. A letter to Caltrans management was received from the local CAL FIRE captain, commending them on their valiant efforts. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation CalTrans Equipment Operator II Jeremy Maraviov for his act of heroism extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Stephen C. Maraviov

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

11/24/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

On November 24, 2004 at approximately 10:00 am, California Department of Transportation employee Stephen C Maraviov was on patrol on Highway 36 in Trinity County when he noticed tire tracks on the shoulder headed towards the edge of an embankment. He parked his vehicle, walked to the edge, looked down and saw an upside down vehicle against a tree about 50 feet down the steep bank The canyon bottom was approximately 1,000 feet below Mr Maraviov climbed down and found an elderly woman trapped in the vehicle. The woman was disoriented and thought she had crashed sometime during the night The outside temperature was 20 degrees, so Mr. Maraviov gave her his jacket. After climbing back to his vehicle and calling for assistance, he returned to the woman's vehicle and secured it to the tree with a chain. He was unable to get the doors open, so he removed the back seat and took the woman out of the vehicle through the trunk Mr Maraviov then put the woman on his back and carried her up the bank where medical help was arriving. The California Highway Patrol determined that the accident happened around 6:30 p m. the previous day and the woman had been trapped in her car for approximately 14 hours before Mr. Maraviov found her Mr Maraviov's actions saved the woman from further injury or death

Thomas Lawrence Marich

Group Supervisor

California Youth Authority

7/21/1981

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 1 00 pm, Mr. Thomas Marich was en route from the Youth Training Schoo when he was passed by a speeding vehicle going approximately 85 100 m p h. Shortly afterwards, the speeding vehicle hit a passing dairy truck and came to a halt. Three of the occupants fled; the fourth approached the elderly truck driver and began beating him. Observing the confrontation, Mr. Marich tried to pin the suspect between his car and the motorist, but was unable to do so. He jumped out of his car to pull the suspect off of the now unconscious man, when the suspect pointed a gun at his head and said, "You're a dead man!" Mr Marich informed the gunman that he was a peace officer At that point the suspect ordered Mr Marich to back away, jumped into his car, and attempted to drive away Mr Marich ran to the rear of his vehicle, opened the hood, and disabled the car by pulling out the coil wire. A police officer arrived and Mr Marich informed him that the suspect was armed. The suspect threw the weapon out of the car window and surrendered to the officer The fugitive was one of four suspects in a $20 000 jewelry theft Policy subsequently recovered the jewelry

Daniel Marinella

State Park Peace Officer

Department of Parks and Recreation

11/9/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of November 9, 2018, State Park Peace Officer Daniel Marinella was called in to respond to the devastating Camp Fire, which would become one of the deadliest fires in state history Officer Marinella worked 16 hours that day, evacuating hundreds of homes, starting along Pentz Road. By the end, he had helped evacuate more than 300 homes in the Paradise, Magalia and Concow areas. While rescuing residents, Officer Marinella was confronted by scorching flames and downed trees that blocked roads He continuously found safe routes to prevent the public and himself from being trapped by the fire. Although well aware of the number of lives already lost to the rapidly spreading fire, he tirelessly and bravely went back into harm's way to do whatever was necessary to save lives With no regard for his own safety, Officer Marinella went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Parks and Recreation State Park Peace Officer Daniel Marinella

Elizabeth Marks

Firefighter I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/22/2012

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 22, 2012, at approximately 2:00 p.m., Firefighter I Elizabeth Marks was off-duty and enjoying a day at the Merced River near Briceburg, when beach goers suddenly began yelling and she saw a young teenage girl struggling in the water, headed straight towards the rapids. Firefighter Marks jumped into the water; she was able to reach the girl, pull her to her chest, and swim back to shore. Once on land, the girl began saying she wanted her father. A Federal Bureau of Land Management Ranger spotted the man in the water and jumped in with a rescue board. The ranger reached the man and yelled he needed help, so Firefighter Marks again entered the water to assist with the rescue. With the girl's father in tow, they reached the slippery bank and, with difficulty, pulled him to shore. He was unresponsive and not breathing. Firefighter Marks began rescue breathing and CPR while the ranger went to contact dispatch and get additional equipment. An ambulance arrived, but it was on the opposite side of the river, so once again Firefighter Marks entered the water with two sheriffs and they took the man across the river on a rescue board to awaiting paramedics. Sadly he did not respond to the life-saving measures, however, the heroic efforts of Firefighter Marks saved his 14 year old daughter's life.

Troy A. Marks

Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/10/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 11:36 a.m., on January 10, 2001, Officer David Qualls and Officer Troy Marks monitored a call of shots being fired at the Lyon's Restaurant in an unincorporated part of Nevada County. Upon their arrival, the officers noted numerous people running from the front entrance of the restaurant. The officers were the first law enforcement personnel to arrive on the scene. Several individuals advised them of a man down with gunshot wounds in the rear parking lot. Both officers drew their weapons and cautiously approached the rear of the building. They observed a man lying on his back, covered in blood. The victim was later identified as Mr. R. Senuty, a cook in the restaurant. Officer Qualls called out to Mr. Senuty to ascertain his condition and determine the location of the suspect. Mr. Senuty indicated the suspect was still inside the restaurant with other patrons. Because of the imminent threat to human life, and despite the fact they were placing themselves in immediate peril, the officers made a conscious decision to enter the building. This decision was based on the officers' firm belief the suspect was inside and that it was highly likely he would continue to shoot patrons. Officers Qualls and Marks began searching from room to room for the suspect. During the search, they were joined by Battalion Chief Rob Paulus from the California Department of Forestry. In the rear kitchen area, the officers found the body of the restaurant manager who had been shot to death. Chief Paulus assisted the officers with searching the rest of the building, and after a short time, they were able to determine the suspect had left the premises. After completing the search for the suspect, Officers Qualls and Marks took steps to secure the crime scene, preserve evidence, and identify witnesses. Once additional personnel arrived on the scene, an extensive search of the area was initiated. Officers Qualls and Marks also assisted with this effort

Michael Marlatt

Lieutenant

California Highway Patrol

1/8/1976

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 5 30 pm, a five-vehicle traffic collision occurred in which two people were killed and a third person was critically injured. A driver approached the collision at a high rate of speed and was unable to slow down before rear-ending the cars directly ahead of him. Although the driver changed lanes and braked, he was unable to stop in time and rear-ended a station wagon which burst into flames. Lieutenant Marlatt and his partner Officer Gary Hanson were driving through the area on patrol They were flagged down by motorists who alerted them of the collision As the officers approached the scene of the accident, approximately 25 foot flames were shooting into the air from the burning vehicles. Without regard to his personal safety, Lieutenant Marlatt approached and entered the burning vehicle and pulled the two occupants from the car. He was unable to remove the third occupant from the vehicle. One victim was reported in critical condition, sustaining burns over 30 percent of her body, but survived her injuries.

Edwin Marron

Los Angeles Police Department, Officer

Other

1/5/2006

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On January 5, 2006, the Los Angeles Police Department and Los Angeles Fire Department responded to an attempted suicide. Officers Mark Mireles and Edwin Marron approached the 6th floor balcony where they reached the woman attempting to commit suicide. As she rolled off the edge of the balcony, Officer Mireles caught her by the leg and she tried to fight him off. Losing the struggle, Officer Mireles called to his partner, Officer Marron who grabbed his leg. Firefighter Schori then arrived and secured Officer Mireles' belt, pulling the two officers and the woman to safety

Leonard Marsh

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

8/9/2007

Special Service Award (Silver)

At approximate y 12:00 p.m., on August 9, 2007, the Pine Grove Maintenance crew was working on westbound Highway 88 at Buckhorn Ridge Road near Ione when a Mule Creek State Prison inmate bus, towing a trailer, passed their location. As the bus drove down the hill, a wheel came off the trailer, causing sparks to ignite the grass next to the roadway. A grassfire quickly ensued burning through the meadow and into the trees. Seeing the blaze, Lead Worker Dave McDaniel sent Michael Blake in his grader to the west flank of the fire where he proceeded to cut a fire line from the highway up into the trees. Meanwhile Leonard Marsh, Kyle Gaspard and John Kearns, using a narrow private drive, drove their large water tanker in from the east. With Kyle Gaspard manning the water hose, they kept the east flank of the fire from reaching two homes located within the path of the fire. Even after the arrival of the Cal Fire units, these employees continued to support the fire trucks with water until the fire was contained. Dave McDaniel and Scot McKinney set up traffic control and managed to keep the road open to traffic, while directing emergency vehicles to the fire. Cal Fire dispatched 6 engines, 2 hand crews, 1 dozer and 2 helicopters to handle this fire. The immediate actions taken by the maintenance crew prevented the fire from reaching catastrophic levels and saved at least two homes from possible destruction. Cal Fire commended the crew for their quick response.

Lori Martin

State Park Superintendent

Department of Parks and Recreation

7/26/2018

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the evening of July 26, 2018, Superintendent Lori Martin, who was in charge of Shasta State Historic Park, had a ready been working the destructive Carr Fire for a couple of days. During this devastating fire, she tirelessly worked to protect the park and all of its irreplaceable artifacts and co ections Due to the speed and unpredictable nature of the Carr Fire, officers were unab e to get teams safe y into the park to evacuate the priceless co ections Pub ic Safety Chief Aaron Wright watched Superintendent Martin fight the fire as it came into Shasta Historic Park, and advised her of just how bad the fire was getting He to d her she should leave before she was trapped She said she would but first had to coordinate the activities of the firefighters who were battling the b aze Chief Wright left to get other staff out and, when returned, found Superintendent Martin still fighting the fire. Everyone, including the firefighters, was ordered out. Yet, even after all the other firefighters were evacuated, Superintendent Martin was still fighting the fire to protect the buildings. He told her to eave the area for her safety She said, with a determined resolve and a comp ete disregard for her own safety, that she had to protect the collections. Fina y, after some discussion, she re uctant y agreed to eave unti the fire's intensity lessened. Her passion and dedication to protecting this park will never be forgotten Superintendent Martin bravely helped fight the Carr Fire at Shasta State Historic Park The fire, one of the largest in California history, started on Ju y 23, 2018, and burned more than 229,000 acres in Shasta and Trinity counties It took three ives and destroyed almost 2,000 structures. The work necessary to fight the fire and protect the important historical collections at Shasta State Historic Park required ong days in dangerous conditions. Superintendent Martin helped save most of the park, inc uding all of the state's irrep aceab e co ections and artifacts. With no regard for her own safety, Superintendent Martin went above and beyond the ca of duty The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Meda of Valor to Department of Parks and Recreation State Park Superintendent Martin

Michael V. Martindale

Engineering Technician I

Department of Transportation

6/13/1965

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 13, 1965, Mr. Martindale was alerted of a capsized boat with two small children aboard out on Whiskeytown Lake, just west of Redding. Mr. Martindale sailed out to the boat with another Highway Division employee. They saw a girl's face through the porthole of the forward portion of the cabin, the only part of the boat supported by an air pocket. Mr. Martindale dove 10 feet under water and under the craft, and entered a water-filled cabin. Floating picnic gear and other impediments at first kept him from reaching the child. He found the 11-year-old girl barely conscious with her head almost up against the cabin's ceiling. He managed to grab her and then pushed her through a small doorway with his feet and out the cabin door. He pushed her toward the surface, where the girl was plucked from the water by other rescuers. Mr. Martindale then returned to look for the 3-year old girl but failed to find her. Nearly collapsing from asphyxiation by the gasoline fumes Mr. Martindale inhaled that filled the vitally small air pocket, he found his way back to the surface and was pulled out. When the craft was later righted again, the 3-year-old girl's body was found beneath the cruiser's flying bridge. Mr. Martindale risked his own life, exposed himself to potentially deadly gasoline fumes for an extended period of time, and suffered injury from near asphyxiation when he dove into the lake and saved the life of one of the small girls that day. Mr. Martindale's actions were truly an extraordinary, selfless heroic deed. On April 24, 1968, he was awarded the state's highest honor, the Medal of Valor for his actions. Additionally, Mr. Martindale was also awarded a Silver Medal accompanied by $1,000 by the national Carnegie Hero Fund Foundation at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Joe J. Martinez

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

12/22/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 21, 2010, at approximately 6:30 p.m., Caltrans employees Brian Borella, Joe J. Martinez, and Alberto P. Miramontes began their storm patrol shifts on State Route 330 in the San Bernardino Mountains where heavy rain had been falling for 24 hours. Mudslides were occurring and rocks were falling onto the roadway at numerous locations. At approximately 3:00 a.m. on December 22, the men requested the route be closed for the safety of the traveling public. As the crew began closing the route, there were still 10 -15 vehicles on the road with approximately 20 people inside and the crew realized they would have to lead the motorists out. Severe slides over six feet high rendered the roadway impassable in several locations and the men had to stop their vehicles, punch holes in the mud and rock blockages, and escort the motorists through. Large rocks were falling and striking the vehicles, debris was raining down on them as well. The roadway was visibly falling in two locations, yet due to Mr. Borella, Mr. Martinez and Mr. Miramontes, everyone made it out safely. It took six months to repair the road.

Robert V. Martinez

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

11/2/1993

Special Act Award (Gold)

Fire Captains Harold T. Mansur and Robert V Martinez, on November 2, 1993, performed extraordinary acts of heroism at great personal risk to their own safety and lives. They initiated and helped 12 inmate/fire crew firefighters in the rescue of seven civilians trapped on a 200 foot high ledge with a major fire descending upon them. On the Pacific Coast Highway at Malibu, at approximately 4:45 pm, a police officer with a megaphone told the victims to come off the hill even if they had to slide down. Only one young woman started down until her footing got too unsure and she froze. The others didn't try and appeared to be a panic state Fire Captains Mansur and Martinez decided the only way to rescue these people would be to use chair-formation rescue and belay (secure a rope on a rock) procedures. FC Mansur grabbed a 100 foot rope and he and his lead inmate started up the hill. FC Mansur found no place to tie the rope so he tied it around his own waist, dug in and leaned back into the hill to establish the rope line. FC Martinez sent three inmates up after the young woman. Martinez then organized eight other inmates into a human chair to bring the victims down one at a time while he served as a lookout about 50 feet up the slope. When they got the young woman to the rope line and told her to slide down, she froze and an inmate wrapped his arms around her and carried her down. When the other victims started down and the flames were getting very close, FC Mansur yelled to the inmates on top, "Get out now! There's no more time!" One of the crew turned to Mansur and framed in flame, held up one finger and yelled back, "There's one more." A developmentally disabled young man was found cowering under a burning bush and had to be wrestled away. Meanwhile too many people below FC Mansur grabbed the rope and it pulled him loose. A couple of those below Mansur grabbed and held the rope until he regained his footing. With flames no more than three to five feet behind them and spotting all around them, Fire Captains Mansur and Martinez made sure all personnel were going down and then joined them in sliding and tumbling to the highway. As soon as their boots hit the pavement, the whole slope they had just been on ignited with 100 foot flames.

Saul Martinez

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/8/1997

Special Act Award (Gold)

State Traffic Officer, Saul Martinez, on May 8, 1997, performed an act of heroism at great risk to his persona safety to protect the life of a fellow officer This act of courage ultimately cost Officer Martinez his ife While on patrol, Officers Saul Martinez, #1255, and James Rice, #9694, were heading eastbound on Dillon Road, east of Little Morongo Road, in the North Palm Springs area. The officers observed a Chevrolet Camaro, with two occupants, parked on the south edge of the roadway facing in an eastbound direction (wrong side of the road). The officers passed the Chevrolet Camaro and made a u-turn to investigate. Both officers exited their patrol unit and were standing 15 to 20 feet south of the roadway edge. A Toyota Camry, trave ing eastbound on Di on Road, veered to the right towards the officers Officer Martinez observed the approaching Toyota, a erted Officer Rice and simultaneous y pushed Officer Rice from the path of the Toyota The Toyota struck the Chevrolet Camaro and both officers The Toyota came to rest with Officer Martinez pinned beneath the vehic e The driver of the Toyota got out of his vehicle to render assistance. Officer Rice was unable to stand because of his injuries and instructed the Toyota driver to use the CHP radio to call for assistance The Toyota driver used the CHP radio and contacted the Indio Communications Center. At 1:14 a.m. Sergeant R. Pierce, #7667, arrived at the scene CHP personnel, in concert with outer law enforcement and fire personnel on scene, ifted the Toyota off Officer Martinez and CPR was administered Both officers were transported by ambu ance to Desert Hospita in Pa m Springs. The actions of Officer Martinez ultimately cost him his ife and he subsequently passed away on May 16, 1997.

William Mason

Battalion Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

10/26/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Battalion Chief's James Rissmiller and William Mason performed an act of heroism at risk to their own personal safety when they drove through active fire that was burning across the roadway to rescue a CDF engine crew of 6 individuals and two members of the news media. On October 26, 2003 fire started as three separate fires, Old Fire, Grand Prix Fire and Devore Fire that merged together in the Community of Devore, San Bernardino County Chief Mason and Rissmiller responded to a request for help from CDF engine 3575, which had become inoperable due to mechanical failure while performing structure protection duties at a home, now lay directly in the path of the fire. The trapped firefighters and media personnel had taken refuge in the garage portion of the home as parts of the main exterior of the home and the entire area around the home burned fiercely Chief's Mason and Rissmiller drove their vehicles through the fire front to the burning structure as the flames grew closer to the trapped firefighters and media personnel and picked up the four trapped individuals, three in Chief Rissmiller's vehicle and one in Chief Mason's and drove them all to safety Chief's Mason and Rissmiller's brave and heroic actions prevented not only serious injury but also possible loss of firefighter and civilian lives

James F. Mathias

Fire Apparatus Engineer Paramedic

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/2/1998

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Tom Oldag, Fire Apparatus Engineer Paramedics Sean Norman, James Mathias and Branson 'Skip' Ratsep on February 2, 1998 and February 3, 1998, performed an act of heroism at risk to their personal safety when they took part in the rescue of numerous citizens stranded in their homes and cars surrounded by rising flood waters. On Monday, during a 17-hour period from 5 30 p m February 2, 1998 to 10:30 a.m. on February 3, 1998 at Pescadero CDF Station 59, Captain Tom Oldag, Fire Apparatus Engineer Paramedics Sean Norman, James Mathias, and Skip Ratsep, assisted by mutual aid from Half Moon Bay Fire District took part in the rescue of 16 citizens, ages 9 months to 86 years old, who were trapped in the top story of a two story apartment complex. In order to rescue the last five victims from the flooded apartment complex, it was necessary to bore through a wall in order to access the victims The victims had to be taken out with 200 feet of rescue line through a strong current while (the rescuers) being careful to avoid numerous floating objects including vehicles, furniture, parts of homes and debris and propane tanks during the rescue operations. In addition to rescuing stranded citizens from the apartment complex, Engine 59 and Engine 1775's crew rescued numerous citizens stranded in their vehicles due to rising water on Pescadero Road The waters had formed a lake on top of Pescadero Road that was 1/2 mile wide and two to five feet deep. Victims were being pulled up onto the CDF engine as their cars began to float away Along with these victims, Engine 59 and Engine 1775 rescued additional citizens in town who were trapped by the rising flood waters In all, Engine 59 and 1775 transported over 16 citizens through the floodwaters to the safety of the Pescadero Station. Without the heroic actions of these four gentlemen, lives would have been at risk and certainly lost.

John Mattox

Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/5/2002

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer John Mattox, on February 5, 2002, performed an act of heroism at risk to his personal safety when he secured the safety of two female citizens from attack by three armed gang members. Officer Mattox, while off duty, observed three male individuals dressed in gang attire stalking two elderly females in a residential area of Los Angeles. Officer Mattox realized the three gang members were seconds away from launching an assault and robbery. Officer Mattox, who was outnumbered, made the courageous decision to intervene. He called out a warning to the ladies and deliberately directed the gang members' attention toward himself. The ladies fled into the safety of their homes and called police. The enraged gang leader charged Officer Mattox, yelling threats and brandishing a semi-automatic 9 mm handgun. Officer Mattox responded to this attack with accurate gunfire from his concealed .40 caliber duty weapon, wounding the suspect. The wounded gang leader and his two accomplices fled on foot, with Officer Mattox in pursuit. Officer Mattox requested back-up and members of the Los Angeles Police Department and California Highway Patrol responded to the area and began a massive manhunt for the outstanding suspects. The wounded suspect and one accomplice, members of a notorious and violent street gang, were apprehended. A few days later, the remaining suspect was killed in a collision after a high-speed pursuit with police. The safety of the intended victims, and the apprehension of the violent gang members all hinged on the courageous actions of Officer Mattox

Austin Matulonis

Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/2/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officers Harris, Matulonis, and Pope, on April 2, 2004, combined efforts and performed an act of heroism at great risk to their own personal safety to rescue a suicidal victim from jumping from the Oakland Bay Bridge. At 7:10 p.m., the California Highway Patrol Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Team was requested to respond to the Oakland Bay Bridge to an incident involving a suicidal subject. Earlier in the day, a suicidal man climbed over the south rail on the upper deck of the Oakland Bay Bridge and perched himself on a six inch wide steel beam. This location is approximately 240 feet above the water of the San Francisco Bay. The man sat down on the beam and began to cut his arms with a razor blade. The San Francisco Police Department crisis negotiator team was requested, responded, and communicated with the man for several hours to no avail. The SWAT team leader began to formulate a plan of action to rescue/apprehend the man from his location that included SWAT Team members rappelling over the side of the bridge. Shortly after 11:00 p.m. the man appeared visibly tired and suffering from hypothermia when he escalated his self-mutilation with the razor blade and moved to a triangular support beam on the Bridge structure and began to lie down. This location afforded the best opportunity for a successful rescue. Officers Harris, Matulonis, and Pope geared themselves with rappel safety equipment and safety lines. Officer Matulonis took a position on the east side of the beam. Both officers simultaneously rappelled to and moved onto the beam, advancing toward the suicidal man's position. As soon as the man observed the officers approaching, he lunged at Officer Matulonis and physically engaged him. Officer Matulonis grabbed the lunging man with his arms, and Officer Harris swiftly moved in to assist and grab the combative subject to attempt to place a safety system around his waist. The man continued to violently struggle without regard to his own safety or the safety of the rappelling officers as he tried to bite, scratch, and pull both officers off of the beam. Officer Pope rappelled onto the beam to assist Officers Harris and Matulonis in subduing the man. All three rappelling officers were now struggling to prevent a totally unrestrained and extremely combative subject from falling to his death. Due to the precarious nature of the situation, a less then lethal beanbag round was fired at the man and struck the right side of his back. This momentarily stunned him and finally enabled and besieged officers to place a safety harness and a safety line on the man. As a result of the extraordinary and heroic efforts of the three SWAT members, the man was raised and moved over the Bridge rail for a successful rescue.

Aaron Maurer

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/30/2019

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 30, 2019, at approximately 2:16 p.m., California Highway Patrol Officer Aaron Maurer was driving his patrol vehicle to a local school to attend a bicycle helmet safety workshop. A Ridgecrest Police Officer was traveling in a separate patrol vehicle to the same safety workshop. On the way there, both officers observed a large plume of black smoke coming from a nearby residence and stopped to investigate the situation. As they neared the residence, they called out asking if anyone was inside. They both heard a muffled voice coming from inside the residence, pleading for help. The officers ran to the front door but could not open the locked door. Officer Maurer used his baton to break a window in the door to try and gain access to the residence but was unsuccessful. Two Ridgecrest residents also stopped to assist the officers. One of the residents successfully kicked the door open and was immediately met with thick black smoke and intense heat. Officer Maurer got down on his hands and knees and entered the house. With less than twelve inches of visibility, he crawled toward the occupant's voice but was overcome by the thick smoke and had to quickly exit the residence for fresh air. Officer Maurer reentered the residence on his hands and knees and was able to see the occupant's white socks and the wheel of his wheelchair approximately six feet inside the residence. Officer Maurer, a Ridgecrest Police Officer, and the two Ridgecrest residents entered the residence to find the occupant, a middle-aged man who was confined to an electric wheelchair and unable to move. They tried to push the wheelchair toward the exit, but they were unable to move it due to its weight. Officer Maurer and two others tried to pull the man out of the wheelchair, but they quickly realized the man was bound to the wheelchair with a seat belt. They worked collectively and placed the wheelchair on its side so the man could breathe a little easier. One of the Ridgecrest residents used a pocketknife to cut the seat belt and all three of them dragged the man out of the residence, saving his life. The other Ridgecrest resident located the man's roommate inside the residence and rescued her from the burning house. Within a few minutes, the entire house was engulfed in flames. Both victims were transported to the hospital for smoke inhalation and further medical treatment. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Maurer went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Aaron Maurer.

John May

Peace Officer Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/29/2022

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 29, 2022, at approximately 5:54 p.m. the Perris Emergency Command Center dispatched a response to a three-vehicle traffic collision with a person trapped inside one of the cars. The first arriving unit was Riverside County Sheriff's Deputy Carlos Rosado, who broadcasted that the vehicle was on fire and confirmed the driver was trapped. Deputy Rosado requested additional nearby units that were carrying fire extinguishers to respond. CAL FIRE Peace Officer Fire Captains John May, Kory McGranahan, Tim Cabral, Joe Green and Ariel Sosa heard the radio call and responded that they were on duty and assigned to their patrol nearby. Upon arrival, the officers observed that the driver was trapped, screaming, burning and bleeding. The driver needed to be pulled from the vehicle, but no one could pry open the door given the extreme conditions. Officer Green rushed to provide support by moving fire extinguishers and assisting Officers May and McGranahan. Due to the twisted metal and hidden fire between the engine and the dashboard, the fire extinguishers did not suppress the fire. Officer McGranahan climbed into the vehicle and placed himself in the fire's path to curtail the flame's growth by inserting the fire extinguisher's dry powder into gaps and cracks near the driver's lower legs. Officer May used his handheld forceable entry tools to peel open the hood and fenders to access the seat of the fire. As more fire extinguishers arrived from nearby units, both Officers May and McGranahan used them to keep the fire from growing. Officer Cabral aided Officers May and McGranahan in attempts to combat the fire. Officer Cabral pulled his ice chest full of water to temporarily suppress the fire's growth beneath the vehicle. These forward-thinking actions slowed the fire's spread, but the driver was still in harm's way. The first fire engine arrived at approximately 6:02 p.m. Still facing the active burning fire without any fire-suppressing agent left, Officers Cabral and Sosa pulled the hose from the fire engine while the firefighters suited up in additional safety gear. Thankfully, Officers Cabral and Sosa extinguished the fire. Additional fire engines arrived and cut the driver out of the vehicle. The driver was flown by air ambulance to the nearest local trauma and burn center. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to Peace Officer Fire Captain John May for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

James Mayhorn

Highway Patrolman

California Highway Patrol

12/25/1960

Special Act Award (Gold)

Officer James Mayhorn was patrolling US 40 on Christmas day, when he observed a car driven by an Air Force sergeant halted on an off-ramp by a man waving a rifle. Officer Mayhorn immediately stopped his vehicle, pulling in behind the other car and off the road. He emerged quietly, keeping the other car between himself and the gunman, the slipped around the rear. As he appeared at the left of the Air Force man's vehicle, the suspect was walking to the driver's window. He swung the rifle around to bear upon the officer, but Officer Mayhorn seized the gun and disarmed him. Only after handcuffing the suspect and placing him the patrol car did Officer Mayhorn discover a pickup truck containing the body of a man whom the suspect had just shot and killed a few minutes earlier. It was determined that the killer tried to stop the pickup truck containing a man and his wife. The truck driver swerved around the man standing in the road and stopped about 40 yards further down the off-ramp. The gunman apparently angered when the driver failed to stop immediately, fired through the rear window and struck the driver in the head. The murdered man's wife was found a short way down the off-ramp, crying hysterically. She was taken to the hospital and Officer Mayhorn took the gunman to jail. Later it was discovered the man had a long history of mental illness.

Eldon McBride

State Park Peace Officer

Department of Parks and Recreation

11/9/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of November 9, 2018, State Park Peace Officer Eldon McBride was called in to respond to the Camp Fire Officer McBride worked to evacuate hundreds of homes, starting along Pentz Road. By the end, he had helped evacuate more than 300 homes in the Paradise, Magalia and Concow areas. At one of the homes, he helped an elderly woman who was not able to get her vehicle out of her garage because the power was off Officer McBride was able to enter the locked garage and get the vehicle out in time for her to escape the approaching fire. While rescuing residents, Officer McBride was confronted by scorching flames and downed trees that blocked roads He continuously found safe routes to prevent the public and himself from being trapped by the fire. Although well aware of the number of lives already lost to the rapidly spreading fire, he tirelessly and bravely went back into harm's way to do whatever was necessary to save lives. With no regard for his own safety, Officer McBride went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Parks and Recreation State Park Peace Officer Eldon McBride.

Matthew J. McCarter

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

12/28/2016

Special Service Award (Silver)

About midnight on December 28, 2016, a vehicle traveling on Hwy 50 left the roadway, became airborn, and landed upside down quite a distance off the highway in the American River. In the vehicle was a family of four. Caltrans Equipment Operator II Matt McCarter had just began his shift at the Kyburz Maintenance Yard. Mr. McCarter responded to Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor Shawn Morgan's call for assistance at Pott's Turnout. Upon arrival, onlookers reported there was a car on its roof in the river and people were trapped in the car. He immediately climbed down the rocks and boulders and got into the river to assist Caltrans Equipment Operator II Steven Rhine with rescue attempts. Mr. McCarter worked with Mr. Rhine and two others to right the car in the river to attempt to free the driver. They were able to right the car and Mr. McCarter assisted Mr. Rhine with getting the driver free and over to the river bank. Mr. McCarter then returned to the car to assist Mr. Rhine with the boy trapped in the backseat. Both tried multiple times, diving into the water, to release the boy from the seatbelt but were unable to do so. A rescue diver arrived, dove under the water and was able to cut the seatbelt. Mr. McCarter and Mr. Rhine carried the boy to the river bank where onlookers started CPR. All victims were taken to the hospital but the boy did not survive. The night this happened, although it wasn't snowing at the time, there was an accumulation of snow on the ground and the temperature was in the 20's. With no regard for his own safety, Mr. McCarter's heroic service saved three lives. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to Caltrans Equipment Operator II Matthew McCarter.

Thomas McConnel

Pilot

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/26/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 26, 2004, Fire Captain David W. Junette and Pilot Thomas McConnel rescued three individuals from a downed Jet Ranger helicopter. The Jet Ranger helicopter was surveying the area to provide spot fire reports, when it clipped a tree line and crashed into an area threatened by a rapidly growing fire. The helicopter's three occupants were injured and trapped inside. Captain Junette and Pilot McConnel aided in slowing the fire by successfully dropping water around the perimeter, enabling ground support to prepare the injured occupants for evacuation. Because of their size, the medical helicopters were unable to maneuver and land near the crash site. Low on fuel and realizing time was of the essence, Captain Junette and Pilot McConnel skillfully piloted and placed their helicopter into a site so small that those on the ground thought it would not be able to land safely. Captain Junette and Pilot McConnel flew two of the injured occupants to the nearby medical helicopters, returned and repeated the same aerodynamic feat again for the third injured occupant. All three were then transported to the hospital.

Mark McCormack

Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

7/26/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 26, 2007, at approximately 2:30 p.m., employees of Scaled Composites, an aerospace development company at Mojave Air and Space Port, were working near two large tanks of nitrous oxide gas when one of the carbon fiber tanks exploded. CHP Sergeants Mark McCormack and Jeffrey Baird along with Officers Jack Borne, Jesse Borne, Stephen Hunsaker, Byron Jobe, Jeffrey Nousch and Roberta Record responded to the scene. The toxic gas fumes and carbon fiber particles from the explosion posed a respiratory hazard. The second tank, which contained 10,000 pounds of nitrous oxide gas, was also damaged and in danger of exploding. Because of the significant hazard and seriousness of the victims' injuries, the first responders could not wait for a hazardous material team, so CHP personnel entered and rendered aid to the victims. They helped place two victims onto backboards, and carried them to a waiting life flight helicopter; two other victims were placed in ambulances and triaged at a safe zone. CHP personnel remained on site evacuating the remaining Mojave Air and Space Port employees to a safe area. Due to the heroic efforts of these men and women, three of the four victims were successfully rescued and lived.

Kurt McCray

Forester I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/25/2010

Special Service Award (Silver)

On July 25th, 2010, CAL FIRE employee Rhett Imperiale was on fire prevention patrol on Highway 96 near the town of Willow Creek, when he noticed fresh skid marks on the turnout. Not seeing a vehicle, he contacted other patrol units for information on past accidents in the area. With no known past accidents, Rhett was concerned there might be a car out of sight over the edge. US Forest Service Officer Bob Phillips responded and the two descended the treacherous slope. They located a vehicle with two seriously injured victims approximately 200 feet below the roadway. The vehicle was upside down on the steep slope, leaking fuel and had one victim still trapped inside. Together they removed the victim from the vehicle, moved both victims to a safe place away from the fuel, and administered first aid until additional help arrived. CAL FIRE employees Kurt McCray, Len Nielson and Mark Rodgers arrived on scene and scaled down the steep rocky slope to provide assistance. With the help of personnel from other law enforcement and fire agencies, it took approximately two hours to secure the victims, move them up to the highway, and transport them to medical care. The rescue was extremely hazardous due to the steepness of the slope, falling rocks, leaking fuel, and high air temperatures. Rescue personnel had to deflect numerous rocks with their hands and arms to protect the victims and other rescue personnel. The rescue team's actions, without regard for their own safety, saved these two accident victims. The State of California takes great pride in presenting Mark Rodgers, Rhett Imperiale, Kurt McCray, and Len Nielson, these Silver Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call or duty or service.

Zackhery McCully

Correctional Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

5/24/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 24, 2017, at 10:20 a.m., in the Pelican Bay State Prison outdoor exercise yard, holding approximately three hundred inmates, a one-on-one fight started. Correctional officers responded to the fight to stop the incident. While responding staff were attempting to quell the incident, approximately 130 inmates began rushing and attacking the officers. Officer Zachery McCully tried to secure the gate that separates the yards, but was unable to do so due to the sheer number of attacking inmates. As Officer McCully was fighting with an inmate, he heard "officer down," and broke away from the inmate he was engaged with to respond to an officer who was lying on the ground bleeding from a wound on his head, and who appeared to be unconscious. As Officer McCully responded and he began to evaluate his condition, he observed an isolated officer holding onto the fence. Due to the sheer numbers of inmates attacking that officer, Officer McCully could only see occasional flashes of a green uniform. Officer McCully feared for that officer's life due to the numbers and ferocity from such a violent attack and responded to that officer. Once there, he was able to tell it was the yard sergeant. Officer McCully utilized force to stop the vicious attack. As Officer McCully and another officer attempted to get the sergeant and themselves out of the area, inmates who had previously been in a prone position, got up and attacked Officer McCully with a barrage of punches to the head and upper chest. Officer McCully was knocked to the ground and his baton was taken from him, but Officer McCully managed to get back to his feet and retreat to a safe location. With no regard for his own safety, Officer McCully's heroic act saved the lives of fellow officers and inmates in the face of a large prison fight. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctional Officer Zachery McCully.

Andy McDaniel

Firefighter I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

8/1/1997

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 1, 1997 at approximately 2:00 p.m. Chief Clayton, Incident Commander (I.C.) assigned Engine 3381 and its crew, along with Chief Story, to respond to an arson fire near Lake Wohlford, Escondido. The CDF crew of Engine 3381, Fire Captain Mike Newel, Firefighter-I Andy McDaniel, and Firefighter-I Lynne Lenel responded to the fire to assist with the rescue of the Melvin family, and performed extraordinary acts of heroism at great risk to their personal safety and lives. The fire spread rapidly through heavy brush and up steep canyons, threatening numerous civilians and their property. The fire destroyed 11 dwellings, 20 - 30 other structures and approximately 30 vehicles. After a quick perusal of the area, it was discovered by I.C. Clayton that several property owners needed to be evacuated immediately. I.C. Clayton was notified by a civilian that the Melvin family was still trapped in the fire area. By this time the fire had developed into a fire storm with flames in excess of 50 feet high. The civilian knew the location of the Melvin family and was placed in Chief Story's vehicle. I.C. Clayton, Chief Story, the civilian, Captain Clay Howe (BLM), Engine 3381 and crew headed into the fire storm. Burning and arching power lines were falling as they drove through the fire. Flame and smoke conditions obscured the road bringing visibility to zero, which presented an immediate life-threatening situation. Direct air drops were ordered on the three vehicles, but had little effect due to poor visibility and turbulent wind conditions. The rescue team reached the Melvin family just before the fire reached their location. Engine 3381 and crew was left to protect the structure while the Melvin family was placed in I.C. Clayton's vehicle and driven back through a second wall of fire to safety. Despite perilous conditions and the possibility of being swept into the fire storm, the actions of Firefighter Andy McDaniel stand as testimony to the quality and courage of the everyday CDF firefighter.

Dave McDaniel

Caltrans Highway Maintenance Lead Worker

Department of Transportation

8/9/2007

Special Service Award (Silver)

At approximately 12:00 p.m. on August 9 2007, the Pine Grove Maintenance crew was working on westbound Highway 88 at Buckhorn Ridge Road near Ione when a Mule Creek State Prison inmate bus, towing a trailer, passed their location. As the bus drove down the hill, a wheel came off the trailer, causing sparks to ignite the grass next to the roadway A grassfire quickly ensued burning through the meadow and into the trees. Seeing the blaze, Lead Worker Dave McDaniel sent Michael Blake in his grader to the west flank of the fire where he proceeded to cut a fire line from the highway up into the trees. Meanwhile Leonard Marsh, Kyle Gaspard and John Kearns, using a narrow private drive, drove their large water tanker in from the east. With Kyle Gaspard manning the water hose, they kept the east flank of the fire from reaching two homes located within the path of the fire Even after the arrival of the Cal Fire units, these employees continued to support the fire trucks with water until the fire was contained Dave McDaniel and Scot McKinney set up traffic control and managed to keep the road open to traffic, while directing emergency vehicles to the fire Cal Fire dispatched 6 engines, 2 hand crews, 1 dozer and 2 helicopters to handle this fire. The immediate actions taken by the maintenance crew prevented the fire from reaching catastrophic levels and saved at least two homes from possible destruction Cal Fire commended the crew for their quick response.

Dale McDonald

Correctoinal Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

5/24/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 24, 2017, at 10:20 a.m., in the Pelican Bay State Prison outdoor exercise yard, holding approximately three hundred inmates, a one-on-one fight started. Correctional officers responded to the fight to stop the incident. While responding staff were attempting to quell the incident, approximately 130 inmates began rushing and attacking the officers. Officer Dale McDonald utilized pepper spray to stop the attack. Officer McDonald saw a fellow officer lying on the ground, surrounded by inmates, getting kicked and hit. Fearing the officer would be killed, Officer McDonald rushed towards him and the officer was able to regain his footing.

Officer McDonald saw his sergeant being overwhelmed by inmates. Officer McDonald knew he needed to get to his sergeant's aid or he would be killed. As Officer McDonald responded to assist his sergeant, he was hit on the side of his head causing him to fall down. While on the ground, Officer McDonald was kicked and hit continuously until staff were able to get to him and escort him off the yard for medical care. With no regard for his own safety, Officer McDonald's heroic act saved the lives of fellow officers and inmates in the face of a large prison fight. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctional Officer Dale McDonald

Robert McEwen

Detective

Other

2/5/2010

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

Homicide detectives from the Fresno County Sheriff's Office, including safety personnel from allied agencies in the town of Minkler, attempted to serve a search warrant. The search warrant team, comprised of Detectives Mark Chapman, Mark Eaton, Joe Wahlenmaier and Robert McEwen, approached the house. The other personnel surrounded the perimeter of the home. The team knocked and announced their presence, and demanded entry several times. The team then broke down an exterior porch door to gain entry, however, they discovered another locked door. Detectives again announced their presence and demanded entry, yet the suspect refused. As Detective Wahlenmaier hit the door with a ram, the suspect, who was lying-in-wait, began shooting through the closed door. Detective Wahlenmaier was shot and immediately collapsed. Detective McEwen instinctively covered Detective Wahlenmaier with his own body, to protect him from further harm. As the gun battle ensued, Sergeant Lopez and Detective Toscano attempted for several minutes to pull Detective Wahlenmaier from the porch, however, his equipment caught on the door frame. Deputy Harris returned cover fire, allowing other deputies to free Detective Wahlenmaier while the gunfire continued. Deputy Harris sustained an injury to his right eye and the right side of his face from a fragmented bullet fired by the suspect. Deputy Harris continued to return cover fire. As the gun battle continued, it was learned that Fresno County Sheriff's Detective Wahlenmaier was mortally wounded. An additional tragedy was the loss of Reedley Police Officer Javier Bejar who was shot and killed by the suspect while aiding sheriff deputies, as you will hear in the next citation. The standoff ultimately ended when the suspect took his own life.

Gene R. McGary

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/2/1999

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Gene McGary and Officer Raymond E Meyer, on August 2, 1999, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at risk to their personal safety when the Officers put themselves between a distraught woman and traffic traveling on U S Route 101. If the Officers had not acted as they did the woman would have fallen to her death At approximately 9:07 p.m. Officer Gene McGary and his partner, Officer Raymond Meyer, were responding to a citizen's report of a possible jumper on the Betteravia Road overcrossing at U. S. Route 101 Upon their arrival, the officers discovered a citizen attempting to keep a distraught 40-year old woman, later identified as Mrs. Mary Gardina, from falling. Mrs Gardina was standing on the traffic side of the eight foot overcrossing fence approximately 35-feet directly over the northbound number 1 lane. The citizen, Mr. Larry Rodarte, was holding the woman through the chain link fence Mrs. Gardina had been arguing with her husband over child custody and in a weak moment, contemplated jumping off of the freeway overcrossing She suddenly had a change of heart and began screaming for help. Without hesitating, Officer McGary and his partner jumped the fence to the traffic side and held Mrs. Gardina against the fence to prevent her from falling to her death Officer McGary immediately requested the Santa Maria City Fire Department (SMFD) respond to remove her to safety In the meantime, Mr Rodarte gathered a length of rope from his vehicle and strung it through the fence around the officers and Mrs. Gardina, securing them to the fence. The SMFD removed Mrs. Gardina to the off ramp shoulder where she was placed in protective custody The SMFD then returned to the overcrossing where Officer McGary and his partner were also removed from their precarious perch. Mrs. Gardina was transported to the Marian Medical Center in Santa Maria where she was admitted for a 72-hour psychiatric hold.

Glen R. McGowan

State Park Ranger II

Department of Parks and Recreation

8/26/1986

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 26, 1986, State Park Ranger Glen R. McGowan responded to an accident at Point Lobos State Park in Monterey County. A woman had fallen through a narrow crevice in the rocks into a deep subterranean grotto filled with violently turbulent sea water. Upon his arrival at the accident scene, Ranger McGowan saw the victim being battered against the vertical rock walls of the subterranean grotto. Her husband, covered with abrasions from his attempts to rescue her, was clinging to a ledge. Another man was on a ledge about three feet above the water.

Although well aware of the dangers confronting him, Ranger McGowan jumped 15 feet down into the 51 degree water. He raised the woman's head above the water and eventually was able to place a life jacket under her head and chest. During this entire time he was being tossed about in the surging channel. A number of times the wave and surge action carried them the length of the 35 foot channel. Several times they were sucked inland towards underwater caves that created an undertow. At those times, Ranger McGowan had to kick backward vigorously to keep them both from being pulled beneath the surface. It took approximately 35 minutes for rescue crews to pull the woman from the water. Ranger McGowan refused to be removed from the channel until ropes were lowered for the victim's husband and the man on the ledge. Once both men were safely removed from the rocks, Ranger McGowan tied the rope around himself and was lifted out of the grotto. He was subsequently treated for hypothermia and lacerations.

Kory McGranahan

Peace Officer Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/29/2022

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 29, 2022, at approximately 5:54 p.m., the Perris Emergency Command Center dispatched a response to a three-vehicle traffic collision with a person trapped inside one of the cars. The first arriving unit was Riverside County Sheriff's Deputy Carlos Rosado, who broadcasted that the vehicle was on fire and confirmed the driver was trapped. Deputy Rosado requested additional nearby units that were carrying fire extinguishers to respond. CAL FIRE Peace Officer Fire Captains Kory McGranahan, John May, Tim Cabral, Joe Green and Arie Sosa heard the radio call and responded that they were on duty and assigned to their patrol nearby. Upon arrival, the officers observed that the driver was trapped, screaming, burning and bleeding. The driver needed to be pulled from the vehicle, but no one could pry open the door given the extreme conditions. Officer Green rushed to provide support by moving fire extinguishers and assisting Officers McGranahan and May. Due to the twisted metal and hidden fire between the engine and the dashboard, the fire extinguishers did not suppress the fire. Officer McGranahan climbed into the vehicle and placed himself in the fire's path to curtail the flame's growth by inserting the fire extinguisher's dry powder into gaps and cracks near the driver's lower legs. Officer May used his handheld forceable entry tools to peel open the hood and fenders to access the seat of the fire. As more fire extinguishers arrived from nearby units, both Officers McGranahan and May used them to keep the fire from growing. Officer Cabral aided Officers McGranahan and May in attempts to combat the fire. Officer Cabral pulled his ice chest full of water to temporarily suppress the fire's growth beneath the vehicle. These forward-thinking actions slowed the fire's spread, but the driver was still in harm's way. The first fire engine arrived at approximately 6:02 p.m. Still facing the active burning fire without any fire-suppressing agent left, Officers Cabral and Sosa pulled the hose from the fire engine while the firefighters suited up in additional safety gear. Thankfully, Officers Cabral and Sosa extinguished the fire. Additional fire engines arrived and cut the driver out of the vehicle. The driver was flown by air ambulance to the nearest local trauma and burn center. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to Peace Officer Fire Captain Kory McGranahan for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

George McGuire

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

3/18/1968

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 18, 1968 Fire Captain George McGuire performed and extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his own safety and life to save the lives of two men trapped by a cave-in at the bottom of a construction ditch Contractors were installing a sewer line in the area of the Sunnymead Fire Station in Riverside County The fire station was normally staffed with one professional firefighter and supplemented with on call volunteer firefighters, a second professional firefighter and a state radio technician were at the fire station for other department business. The firefighters were alerted that a cave-in had occurred at the sewer line construction site. Fire Captains George McGuire and Delbert Tate along with Radio Technician Ronald James answered the alarm. Two men - Lloyd Self and James Hansen were working at the bottom of a 13-foot deep trench when the bank gave way and completely covered them with loose dirt. The rescuers succeeded in uncovering Self's head, but more loose dirt slipped into the trench. Captain McGuire then placed himself between Self and the sliding dirt. He was buried to his waist and Captain Tate was buried to his knees. Despite this set back, McGuire, Tate and James continued their rescue operations, managing to uncover and revive the two buried men.

Justin S. McHenry

State Park Peace Officer/Lifeguard

Department of Parks and Recreation

10/25/2010

Special Service Award (Silver)

On October 25, 2010, at approximately 3:15 p.m., State Park Peace Officer/Lifeguard Justin S McHenry responded to a call describing two women caught in the heavy surf at Carmel River State Beach The two friends had been standing on the beach talking with their backs to the water when a large wave carried them both into the ocean. Officer McHenry arrived on the scene, put on his wetsuit, and spotted one of the women. He knew he couldn't enter the water directly in front of her due to the dangerous surf, so he ran 100 yards north along the beach and swam out to her. When he reached the 62 year old woman she was physically exhausted. She had been in the 57 degree water for approximately twenty minutes in street clothes and was having a hard time keeping her head above water Officer McHenry put a rescue tube around her and swam her out beyond the dangerous breaking waves, towing her for 15 minutes while searching for a safe shore A CAL FIRE Inflatable Rescue Boat arrived and Officer McHenry assisted the woman into the boat. She was transported to the shore, taken to a local hospital by ambulance, and treated for extreme hypothermia and near drowning After swimming back to the beach, Officer McHenry continued a visual search for the second victim, but unfortunately, she perished in the heavy surf.

John McKenzie

State Park Curator

Department of Parks and Recreation

8/25/1962

Special Service Award (Silver)

On August 25, 1962, Fort Ross Ranger William Bishop and Curator John McKenzie and another rescuer launched a 16 foot outboard boat in the heavy seas to rescue crew members of the sailing yacht "Holiday" when a huge wave swept the sailing vesse The boat's engine was disab ed, the vesse was taking on water and one crewman was washed overboard With their radio gone, the three remaining members burt a fire on the deck. Ranger Bishop, Curator McKenzie and the other rescuer launched the outboard boat and pulled the 80 foot yacht to deep water despite the imminent danger of breaking up on the rocky coast. All but the crewman swept to sea were saved.

Scot McKinney

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

8/9/2007

Special Service Award (Silver)

At approximately 12:00 p.m., on August 9, 2007, the Pine Grove Maintenance crew were working on westbound Highway 88 at Buckhorn Ridge Road when a Mule Creek State Prison inmate bus, towing a trailer, passed their location. As the bus drove down the hill, a wheel came off the trailer, causing sparks to ignite the grass next to the roadway. A grassfire quickly ensued burning through the meadow and into the trees. Seeing the blaze, Lead Worker Dave McDaniel sent Michael Blake in his grader to the west flank of the fire where he proceeded to cut a fire line from the highway up into the trees. Meanwhile Leonard Marsh, Kyle Gaspard and John Kearns, using a narrow private drive, drove their large water tanker in from the east. With Kyle Gaspard manning the water hose, they kept the east flank of the fire from reaching two homes located within the path of the fire. Even after the arrival of the Cal Fire units, these employees continued to support the fire trucks with water until the fire was contained. Dave McDaniel and Scot McKinney set up traffic control and managed to keep the road open to traffic, while directing emergency vehicles to the fire. Cal Fire dispatched 6 engines, 2 hand crews, 1 dozer and 2 helicopters to handle this fire. The immediate actions taken by the maintenance crew prevented the fire from reaching catastrophic levels and saved at least two homes from possible destruction. Cal Fire commended the crew for their quick response.

Gregory McKurtis

Class Title: Unknown

Department of Transportation

2/17/1986

Special Service Award (Silver)

On February 17, 1986, in the midst of a violent mountain rainstorm, a major landslide covered the east and westbound lanes of Interstate 80 near Floriston above the Truckee River. A second landslide swept a car with a family of five inside, 200 feet down a steep embankment. The three teenaged sons were able to make their way out of the crushed vehicle and up to the highway, but the parents could not climb the steep hillside. In the heavy rain and strong wind, California Highway Patrol Sergeant Bergquist maneuvered his way through the slide area, despite the imminent danger of more earth movement. Assisted by the husband and Caltrans employee Gregory McKurtis, they were able to push and carry the exhausted woman up to the roadway less than 30 minutes before a third and still larger rock slide came down just 100 feet east of where the couple had been stranded

Jay McPeek

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/12/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Jay McPeek, on August 13, 2004 performed an act of heroism at great risk to his personal safety by rescuing a victim from a burning tract-trailer combination that had been involved in a traffic collision. At approximately 11:47 a.m. Officer McPeek received a call of a collision involving a tractor-trailer that was northbound United States 395. This tractor-trailer ran off the west side of US 395 crossed approximately 700 feet of desert and plunged into a ravine. As a result of the collision, the load of glass bottles of mayonnaise ruptured through the front of the trailer and penetrated the sleeper area of the tractor. Officer McPeek responded to the scene arriving within three minutes. Officer McPeek observed the tractor started to burn. He ran across the desert and through the broken bottles of mayonnaise to reach the driver's side of the tractor. As he approached the cab, he noticed the left fuel tank was ruptured and leaking diesel fuel onto the ground. Officer McPeek climbed onto the cab but could not see inside due to the black smoke from the fire. He then observed the driver next to the driver window. Officer McPeek was unable to open the driver door, because it was jammed shut due to the collision. Officer McPeek made his way through the broken glass and mayonnaise to the passenger side of the tractor. Officer McPeek attempted to open the passenger door, but it too was jammed. Officer McPeek used his baton to break out the passenger side window. As black smoke and flames rushed out of the cab's interior, he could not see inside but heard the driver moaning. Officer McPeek was forced to back away from the cab because the flames were emitting from the broken window. Officer McPeek returned to the driver side of the tractor. The driver was now a few inches away from the officer on the other side of a closed window. The officer used his baton to break out the driver's side window, reached inside the burning cab, grabbed the driver's arm and attempted to pull him to safety. The driver was able to pull free of Officer McPeek's grasp and backed away into the flames. Officer McPeek was forced to again retreat from the cab, due to flames. The driver climbed back into the sleeper berth of the tractor. The driver slid out of the sleeper berth through an opening in the cab and climbed into the trailer. Officer McPeek climbed through the broken glass bottles of mayonnaise in pursuit of the driver, located the driver through smoke in the trailer and pulled him outside to safety, then rolled away from the burning tractor-trailer. The driver survived the collision with serious burns over his entire body.

James McWhirter

Senior Transportation Engineer

Department of Transportation

9/17/1988

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 17, 1988, James McWhirter was the first to arrive at the scene of an accident in which a vehicle had crashed broadside into a large oak tree. He observed grass burning under the wrecked vehicle and two occupants getting out the open door on the driver's side. James approached the occupants and proceeded to administer aid, but found no obvious injuries demanding his immediate attention. He asked if anyone else was in the vehicle and learned that another passenger, a 17-year-old high school student was trapped inside the burning vehicle. By that time, the engine compartment was in flames and there was an ever-present threat of an explosion and fire entering the cab of the vehicle. Without regard to the imminent danger, James went closer to the vehicle, it was very dark, and felt around and found a third person in the rear seat on the passenger side, who was not moving and unconscious. James felt around some more and found the injured person's pulse, so he knew he was alive. By this time others were beginning to arrive. James asked if anyone had a flashlight, but no one did. He then returned to the vehicle which was now burning in the front around the engine. The injured young man was regaining consciousness, moving and making unintelligible sounds, but he was unable to help himself. The passenger side of the car was extensively damaged, preventing access. James tried to pull the injured passenger from the burning vehicle through the driver's side door, but his feet and legs were caught between the crumpled drive shaft area and the smashed-in side of the vehicle, and James could not move him. The vehicle continued to heat up, with fumes from the smoldering rubber and plastic rapidly filling the passenger space inside the car. It was apparent that further effort to remove the young man through the driver's side was impossible. James and the driver were looking around for a rock, or anything, to break out the rear window, but found nothing. Onlookers were screaming that the trapped passenger had to get out before the burning car became completely engulfed. At this point, James climbed onto the trunk of the car and grabbed an over-hanging tree limb for stability, and kicked hard at the rear window several times, finally breaking out the glass. James and the passenger's friend each grabbed the young man under his shoulders, one on each side, and began pulling and jerking up and down, and sideways, in an effort to free him. The teenager abruptly came free, and they were able to lift him out, leaving behind his shoes. This final effort to free the victim came at the last possible moment, because the interior of the cab had now become completely engulfed by fire, and James knew another 30 to 40 seconds would have been fatal to the young man. James McWhirter performed an extraordinary act of heroism under great risk to his own personal safety and life in rescuing the trapped 17-year-old accident victim from the fiery crash. He is truly deserving of the Medal of Valor, which is the highest honor the State of California has within its power to grant its employees.

John Meaders

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/26/1988

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the morning of December 26, 1988, Officer John Meaders arrived at the scene of an accident in Burbank. He found a vehicle hung up on a guardrail and partially suspended 30 feet above railroad tracks. The car's engine compartment was on fire. Officer Meaders asked a nearly citizen to help him remove the driver from the burning vehicle. He returned to the vehicle to remove a passenger, but was unable to do so because of the intense heat and smoke. Officer Meaders then obtained a fire extinguisher from a truck driver, expended it on the flames, and with the aide of the citizen, removed the second occupant. At this time, Officer Meaders discovered a third victim trapped in the rear seat. He and officers from the Burbank Police Department tried to gain access, but were unsuccessful and the occupant later died at the hospital from third degree burns. Officer Meaders suffered from smoke inhalation.

Charles Medicus

Patrolman

California Highway Patrol

11/26/1963

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 7 40 pm, Officer Char es E Medicus and his partner Robert Blecksmith were on patro in the Litt erock area when they observed a house on fire in a field near Highway 138. The officer notified the fire department and then proceed to the house to see if they could be of assistance. A locked gate b ocked the driveway, but Officer Blecksmith quick y opened it and Officer Medicus drove through and on to the house. Upon his arrival the residence was fu of smoke and when he opened the back door he discovered an elderly woman lying on the floor overcome by the smoke. Officer Medicus quick y dragged her to safety, incurring painfu injuries to one of his legs when he encountered cacti plants in the yard. Whi e Officer Blecksmith ran to call an ambu ance, Officer Medicus applied mouth to mouth resuscitation until he revived the victim. Fearing that another person might sti be in the house, he entered the back door and by crawling on his hands and knees through the smoke filled rooms, located an elderly man who was being lifted out a broken window by a passing motorist. Choking on the smoke, Officer Medicus jumped out the window and immediate started mouth to mouth resuscitation on the victim while Officer B ecksmith app ied cardiac massage They continued their attempts until the fire department arrived; unfortunately, the second victim expired before the rescue.

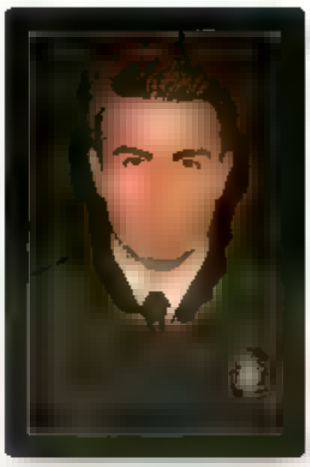
Jose A. Medina

Forester I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/19/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)



On September 19, 2009, on a very hot and dry Southern California day in Riverside County, a brush fire started near State Route 79 and Sage Road east of Temecula. The fire spread rapidly, eventually burning over 340 acres and destroying eight homes. Firefighting conditions were extremely explosive with the temperature near 100°F, winds blowing up to 19 miles per hour and flame lengths ranging from 60 to 90 feet high. CAL FIRE Copter 301 was flying a fire mission as an initial attack responding crew. On board was the pilot and CAL FIRE employees Captain Abril and Firefighters Connolly, DeLeon, Medina, Ricketts, and Santone. The crew was assigned to a hot spot in an attempt to contain the rapidly expanding fire. After landing, the crew began hot spotting the fire using hand tools. Shortly thereafter, the crew learned of a woman trapped in her home and surrounded by fire. Captain Abril immediately recognized he was near the location. The crew frantically began looking for and soon found a barefoot 84-year old woman carrying two dogs. The woman was standing in front of a residence that was fully involved with fire and frantically told the crew she didn't know where to go or what to do. The crew immediately gave the woman a canteen of water and medically assessed her. Two firefighters entered a nearby residence and retrieved a blanket and pair of shoes for her. They shielded the woman with the blanket, assessed the best escape route, and at great personal risk to the woman and themselves, passed through fire and nearly blinding smoke conditions to a safer location. The actions of the crew, without regard for their personal safety, saved the life of the woman. The State of California takes great pride in presenting to Captain Frank Abril and Firefighters Eric Connolly, David DeLeon, Jose Medina, Adam Ricketts and Charles Santone, these Gold Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Kevin Mefford

Hydroelectric Plant Electrician I

Department of Water Resources

11/22/2012

Special Service Award (Silver)

On November 22, 2012, at approximately 7:32 a.m., Hydroelectric Plant Electrician I Kevin Mefford, a volunteer firefighter with the Butte County Fire Department, responded to problems at the Ronald B. Robie Thermalito Pumping Generating Plant. Thick smoke was filling the interior of the 500 foot long, five story building. It was Thanksgiving Day and the plant was unmanned. Mr. Mefford worked at the plant for 19 years and was familiar with it. He acted as a guide for his fellow firefighters and they made at least eight attacks on the fire as it kept re-igniting and spreading. Some firefighters became low on air and one became tangled in cables as the smoke eliminated visibility. In the dark, smoky, confusing and often dangerous situation, Mr. Mefford helped them avoid many hazards including electrical equipment, confined spaces, stored lubricants and many feet of wiring. The next day, although the fire was not extinguished, Mr. Mefford donned his firefighting gear again to assess the situation on each floor. Without Mr. Mefford's heroic service, the plant probably would have been lost.

Paul Melendrez

Division Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

10/3/2017

Special Service Award (Silver)

On October 3, 2017, at 6:00 a.m., two crewmen from the Mono County Road Department discovered an occupied home whose porch was engulfed in flames. California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Division Chief Paul Melendrez happened upon the scene on his way to work, as well. All three men quickly utilized the limited local water supply and fire extinguishers to slow the spread of the flames. Without wearing any personal protective gear, Chief Melendrez broke the window, entered into the burning building, and assisted two adults and two children to safety. The three men continued to fight the fire, knocking it down by the time the local fire department arrived. Without the assistance of Chief Melendrez the residents would have been overcome by the smoke and fire. With no regard for his own safety, Chief Melendrez's heroic service saved a family from a burning home. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Division Chief Paul Melendrez.

Vincent Mendoza

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/12/2019

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 12, 2019 at approximately 5:30 pm, California Highway Patrol Officer Robert Paul was assisting California Highway Patrol Officer Andre Moye, Jr. with an enforcement stop, when the suspect retrieved a rifle, and opened fire without warning. Officer Moye was struck and critically wounded. With Officer Moye down, the suspect quickly turned his attention towards Officer Paul, who immediately drew his weapon and engaged the suspect. Officer Paul was able to broadcast, "Officer down!" to the CHP Inland Communications Center. Riverside Area CHP units immediately responded to the scene, as did units from the Riverside Police Department and Riverside County Sheriff's Department. Officer Paul sustained multiple gunshot wounds to both legs, but continued his courageous fight from the supine position, moving himself from left to right, and keeping the suspect unsure of his location. The suspect advanced by taking cover behind vehicles. Although outmatched by the suspect's weapon, Officer Paul was able to actively engage the suspect in spite of his life-threatening injuries and to hold off the suspect until backup arrived. After several minutes, California Highway Patrol Officer Ryan Smith arrived on scene and his patrol vehicle immediately began taking rounds from the suspect. Officer Smith was able to exit his patrol vehicle and return fire. While actively engaging with the suspect, Officer Smith was able to locate and assist Officer Paul. Officer Smith grabbed Officer Paul's arms and pulled him out of the line of fire. Officer Smith sustained wounds to both legs, but he was able to pull Officer Paul over 100 feet to safety. While Officer Smith pulled Officer Paul to safety, California Highway Patrol Officer Vince Mendoza arrived on scene and immediately engaged the suspect using a long rifle to draw fire away from Officer Smith and Officer Paul. For over 12 minutes, with the assistance of allied agencies, multiple rounds were fired at the suspect, who was fatally shot. During the gunfight, Riverside County Sheriff's Department Deputies were able to evacuate Officer Paul from the scene via patrol vehicle and transport him to a nearby hospital. With the help of tourniquets, applied while en route to the hospital, and exceptional medical intervention at the hospital, Officer Paul survived the shooting and is expected to make a full recovery. With no regard for his own safety, Officers Mendoza went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Vincent Mendoza.

Juan Mercado

Conservationist I

California Conservation Corps

3/13/2002

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 13, 2002, Conservationist I, Juan Mercado heard a young girl's cry for help and ran across the street where he quickly discovered that a pit of dirt had collapsed on three girls, burying them alive. He immediately called to his crew for help. Without regard for their own safety, his Crew Leader and a Corps member climbed a seven foot high barbed wire fence and began digging with their bare hands in the 14 foot deep pit, attempting to rescue the children. Mr. Mercado called 911 as he frantically looked for tools that could speed up the lifesaving efforts. Finding nothing, he too climbed the barbed wire fence and began digging with his hands, despite the unstable conditions. Large amounts of dirt fell on their legs. Despite these circumstances, they continued to dig, placing themselves at risk with no concern for their own safety. All three girls were extracted from the pit. Two, unfortunately, did not survive. The third girl spent a several days in the hospital, and was then released.

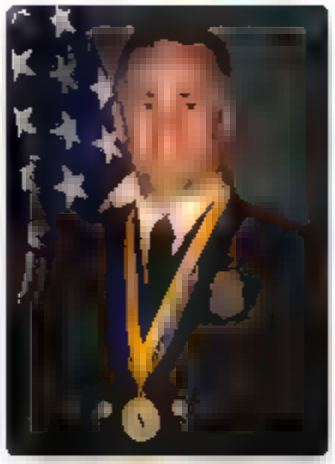
John Messina

Battalion Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

12/12/2014

Special Act Award (Gold)



On December 12, 2014, at approximately 2:00 p.m., California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Battalion Chief John Messina was off duty and driving through Butte County when he heard a radio call describing people trapped in their vehicle by floodwaters. Chief Messina was close to the location and arrived five minutes later to find a flooded roadway and a submerged vehicle with three adults and a small child on top. Chief Messina advised them over his PA system to stay where they were as help was on its way, but the vehicle, swept by the force of the swift moving water, suddenly started moving downstream into the main channel of the Honcut Creek. The terrified victims screamed they could not swim. Chief Messina quickly weighed his options, and although floodwater has many dangers, entered the fast flowing water without a life jacket or personal protection equipment and swam 100 yards to the terrified victims. The submerged vehicle was hung up on a fence and trees, and starting to roll over on its side when Chief Messina arrived. He told the victims to hand him the child and jump from the vehicle. After assisting the victims from the top of the vehicle, he gathered them and swimming initially while holding the child, helped them get to higher ground. The CAL FIRE Butte County Swift Water Team and ambulance arrived and the victims were placed in the ambulance and treated for hypothermia.

Raymond E. Meyer

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/2/1999

Special Act Award (Gold)

Ca ifornia Highway Patrol Officer Gene McGary and Officer Raymond E Meyer, on August 2, 1999, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at risk to their persona safety when the Officers put themselves between a distraught woman and traffic trave ing on U S Route 101. If the Officers had not acted as they did, the woman would have fallen to her death At approximately 9:07 p.m., Officer Gene McGary and his partner, Officer Raymond Meyer, were responding to a citizen's report of a possible jumper on the Betteravia Road overcrossing at U. S. Route 101 Upon their arrival, the officers discovered a citizen attempting to keep a distraught 40-year old woman, later identified as Mrs. Mary Gardina, from falling. Mrs Gardina was standing on the traffic side of the eight foot overcrossing fence approximate y 35-feet directly over the northbound number 1 lane. The citizen, Mr. Larry Rodarte, was holding the woman through the chain link fence. Mrs. Gardina had been arguing with her husband over child custody and in a weak moment, contemp ated jumping off of the freeway overcrossing She suddenly had a change of heart and began screaming for help. Without hesitating, Officer McGary and his partner jumped the fence to the traffic side and held Mrs. Gardina against the fence to prevent her from falling to her death. Officer McGary immediately requested the Santa Maria City Fire Department (SMFD) respond to remove her to safety In the meantime, Mr Rodarte gathered a length of rope from his vehicle and strung it through the fence around the officers and Mrs. Gardina, securing them to the fence. The SMFD removed Mrs. Gardina to the off ramp shoulder where she was placed in protective custody The SMFD then returned to the overcrossing where Officer McGary and his partner were a so removed from their precarious perch. Mrs. Gardina was transported to the Marian Medical Center in Santa Maria where she was admitted for a 72-hour psychiatric hold.

Stanley Meyers

Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/12/1969

Special Act Award (Gold)

Officer Stanley H Meyers was patrolling the Harbor Freeway on his motorcycle when he received a dispatch about a person on the Vincent Thomas Bridge in Wilmington Officer Meyers climbed 360 feet up a steel ladder in an unlighted support tower inside a piling to reach the woman just as she reached the same place on a top beam by walking up the bridge expansion cable. The woman was about eight feet above him when he emerged from the hatch at the top of the ladder. The woman was clutching a bible and facing the sea. Officer Meyers grabbed her from behind, locking her arms with his. The woman began crying and begged the officer to leave her alone and let her jump. Officer Meyers decided the best action would be to stay put rather than attempt to bring the woman down. After 25 minutes, the LA City Fire Department arrived and the woman finally agreed to come down. Officer Meyers passed her down to the fireman by holding her by the hands, the fireman took hold of her feet to help her onto the platform and then the woman climbed down the ladder herself.

Frank D. Milazzo

Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

12/2/2006

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 2, 2006, at approximately 7:00 p.m., California Department of Fish and Game, Warden Frank D. Milazzo, was on patrol near Coulterville, California, when he overheard radio traffic from the Mariposa County Sheriff's Office. They were sending an officer in response to an armed suicidal, and perhaps homicidal, man who was under the influence of alcohol and drugs. Warden Milazzo responded to the remote foothill location to assist the Sheriff's office. Once on scene, Warden Milazzo and the Sheriff's Deputy and Reserve Officer were confronted by a man waving a loaded revolver. The man threatened to kill himself and then wanted the officers to kill him, and proceeded to point the weapon at his head several times. Warden Milazzo talked to the suspect, established a rapport, and encouraged him to surrender his weapon. As the man continued to threaten the officers and himself, Warden Milazzo saw that the hammer of the revolver was cocked back in the firing position. He continued to taunt the officers, hoping they would kill him. In order to keep talking to the suspect, Warden Milazzo was forced to move to him, occasionally exposing himself to potential gunfire during the slow moving standoff. This continued for approximately 35 minutes as the officers waited for additional backup units. During this entire event, Warden Milazzo placed himself at great personal risk to assist the Sheriff's Deputies, while trying to save the man's life. When additional Deputies arrived, they were able to subdue the man with a "less than lethal" round from a shotgun. Warden Milazzo showed incredible resolve and professionalism in the face of danger. He didn't hesitate to respond and assist an allied agency during a critical incident, and his actions helped to subdue the suspect and allow deputies to take him into custody.

Ean Miller

State Parks Lifeguard

Department of Parks and Recreation

12/15/2018

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the evening of December 15, 2018, State Parks Lifeguard Ean Miller was on duty near Pudding Creek Beach in Fort Bragg when he heard a call about two kayakers in distress near the town of Westport. He responded to the scene through rain and darkness and found one victim onshore suffering from hypothermia. The second victim was still in the water about 75 yards offshore. Lifeguard Miller entered the surging surf alone and in the dark. He had to contend with dangerous ocean conditions, including six and a half foot swells every 12 seconds, 15-knot winds, exposed rocks and breaking surf. Using his helmet flashlight, buoy, fins and rescue board, he made his way to the victim, who was face down in the water and brought her back to shore. Once onshore, Lifeguard Miller performed CPR on the victim until patient care was taken over by the paramedics and she was transported to Santa Rosa. She made a full recovery. The victim would have drowned if not for Lifeguard Miller's life-saving actions. With no regard to his own safety, Lifeguard Miller went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to Department of Parks and Recreation State Parks Lifeguard Ean Miller.

Eric J. Miller

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

12/6/1985

Special Act Award (Gold)

Fire Captain Eric J Mi er, on December 6, 1985, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his persona safety and life in saving the life of a truck driver who was trapped under his overturned vehic e and an unstable load of lumber. Captain Mi er had just arrived home, at approximately 7:15 p m , when he heard a loud crash near his home. Captain Mi er grabbed a flashlight, ran to his scene and found a diesel semi-tractor and trailer overloaded with umber had overturned in his yard. He ran to the truck but was unable to locate the driver in or around the cab He then heard cries for help coming from underneath the load of lumber The umber was extremely unstable and Captain Miller knew going through it was too risky He decided the safest way to reach the driver was to tunne under the bed of the truck through the mud. He returned to his home, called the CHP, and retrieved two sma mi itary sty es shovels from the garage. Upon returning to the scene, he aid on his stomach and began to dig through the mud, rainwater and debris After a whi e he finally reached the trapped driver who was badly injured, lying face down in the mud and having trouble breathing Captain Miller dug around the driver's face to get more space and air for him to breath The steady fa of rain required Captain Miller to constantly remove the build-up of mud around the injured driver's face. It was determined that his injuries were too serious to try and move him before help could arrive. As they awaited the arrival of rescue personne , several anxious moments occurred as the constant flow of water, mud and debris caused several water and mud slides which in turn caused the lumber to shift over the two men. Upon arrival of the paramedics, they slid the driver into a backboard and he was safely removed through the opening to a waiting ambu ance

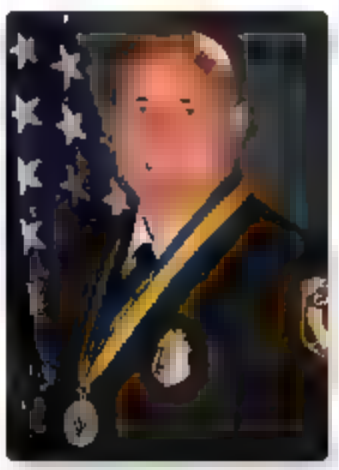
Johnny Miller

Fire Apparatus Engineer

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/25/2015

Special Service Award (Silver)



On July 25, 2015, at approximately 3:00 p.m., California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Apparatus Engineer Johnny Miller was boating with his family in a remote area of the Colorado River in Lake Havasu, Arizona, when he saw a boat suddenly submerge, throwing two infants and four adults into the water. None of the adults were wearing life vests. The water was very rough and visibility was limited due to the many speed boats drag racing on this particular section of the river. Engineer Miller immediately called out to the adults to move away from the rapidly sinking boat and then, without hesitation, jumped into the choppy water. The two infants were wearing life vests; however, they were so young their vests were ineffective and they could not keep their heads above the churning water. Engineer Miller swam out and had both babies in his arms in a matter of minutes. With the infants safely in his care, Engineer Miller then swam over and rescued their mother, who couldn't swim, and assisted all three to a waiting boat. The men also lacked life vests, but were able to swim to the boat as directed by Engineer Miller.

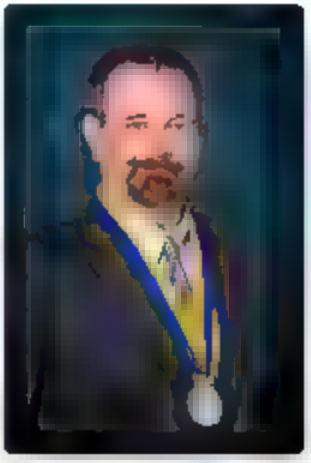
William S. Miller

Caltrans Highway Maintenance Worker

Department of Transportation

1/21/2020

Special Service Award (Silver)



On the morning of January 21, 2020, around 1.30 a m , Caltrans Highway Maintenance Worker Wi iam Mi er was operating the cone truck as an "early warner" for a sweeping operation on Highway 267. The ear y warner serves as an advanced alert for approaching traffic While Mr Miller was parked on the so uthbo und shoulder with his warning lights on and a sign indicating there was a sweeping crew ahead, he observed two vehicles approaching from the north. After the first vehic e passed by, Mr Miller fe t an impact from the second vehicle striking the rear of his truck A though in shock, Mr. Miller was able to notify dispatch about the accident. Mr Mi er exited his truck and noticed both his truck and the vehicle were on fire. In response, he grabbed a fire extinguisher from his truck and attempted to extinguish the flames. A female driver exited the other vehicle, and Mr Miller saw that she was st mb ing and appeared dazed. As Mr Miller approached the woman, he noticed she was faltering and standing in fuel that was leaking from the cone truck's ruptured fuel tank At this moment, flames fu y engu fed both vehic es, and Mr Mi er quickly pulled the woman away from the burning vehicles to a safe distance, saving her from potential injuries. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Va or to Ca ifornia Department of Transportation Highway Maintenance Worker William S. Miller for his act of heroism extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

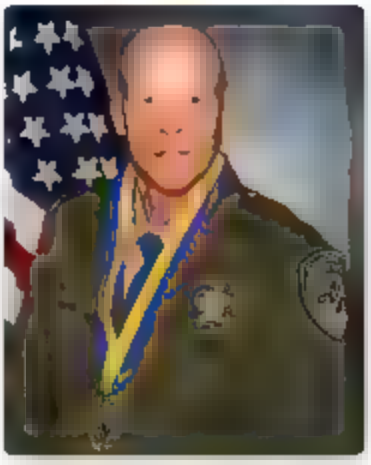
Chad Millward

Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/8/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)



On October 8, 2017, at 9:52 p.m., California Highway Patrol Officers Pete Gavitte and Whitney Lowe responded to a rapidly growing fire in the Atlas Peak area of Napa County. Approximately 20 minutes later, their helicopter arrived on scene and observed the

smoke-filled air, fallen trees and downed power lines across multiple roadways. Trapped residents had little time before the approaching fire would overcome them. Officer Gavitte and Officer Lowe recognized the only escape for these residents would be by helicopter rescue. Despite the firestorm's wind gusts in excess of 70 miles per hour, and extreme downdrafts and updrafts, they made the decision to fly their helicopter into the heavy smoke and land near the line of vehicles attempting to exit the area. Officer Gavitte stated that, "the intense windy conditions felt like a hurricane," but he was able to maintain control of the helicopter. Realizing the need for additional resources, Officers Gavitte and Lowe requested assistance from California Highway Patrol Northern Division helicopter, crewed by Officer Chad Millward and Officer Phillip Agdeppa. Upon arriving at the scene, Officer Agdeppa exited the helicopter and was quickly informed of a trapped woman who was more than eight months pregnant. The pregnant woman and three others were quickly loaded onto the helicopter and flown to safety at a local hospital. The officers faced grueling and physically demanding conditions for more than six continuous hours in complete darkness as they conducted multiple dangerous flights behind the fire line while smoke, ash, and embers blew around them. Aerial surveillance after the night of the rescues showed the area where the rescue operations were conducted had been completely overrun by the fire. The Atlas Fire burned more than 50,000 acres and destroyed over 400 structures. With great risk to his own safety, Officer Millward went above and beyond the call of duty, saving 15 lives. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Chad Millward

Bret Milovich

Long Beach Police Department

Other

5/30/2002

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

"On Thursday, May 30, 2002, at 1727 hours, Officer B Milovich was dispatched to the Top Value Market, 421 Pacific Avenue, regarding a possible Assault with a Deadly Weapon occurring now, with three subjects down. Additional information was broadcast that shots were being fired from inside the market. Officer Milovich was the first to arrive on scene and was immediately met by hysterical citizens, who were pleading for him to help them, advising him that there was a man inside the store shooting innocent victims. At this time, Community Policing Officers W Johnston, and C Crawford assisted Officer Milovich The Three of them formed an Emergency Action Team (EAT) and without hesitation or regard for their own safety, entered the store The officers had limited information as to the suspect's description and were immediately confronted by numerous victims, who were frantically trying to leave the store. The officers showed great restraint with these people, not knowing if one of them was possibly the suspect. The officers observed at least two victims on the ground, who were mortally wounded, one of them being an 8-year-old child. There were additional shooting victims within the store, bleeding. With the carnage in front of them, the officers were still able to maintain their focus and subsequently isolated the suspect, who was armed with two handguns. The suspect pointed his weapon at Officer Milovich, at which time Officers Johnston and Crawford engaged the suspect in a gun battle and mortally wounded him. Officers Milovich, Johnston, and Crawford are to be commended for the tremendous job they did on that night By their actions, in a manner that was well above and beyond the call of duty, each of these officers demonstrated uncommon valor by directly placing their lives on the line to prevent the suspect from shooting anyone else. There is no doubt in anyone's mind that the immediate actions of Officers Milovich, Johnston, and Crawford saved many lives The suspect clearly possessed the weaponry and ammunition with which he could have taken many more lives. The community and our Department are very fortunate to have these valiant officers dedicated to our service. They clearly demonstrated that they possess the attributes that we all aspire to, bravery, character, discipline and the willingness to truly protect and serve the citizens of Long Beach "

Alberto P. Miramontes

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

12/21/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 21, 2010, at approximately 6:30 p.m. Ca trans emp oyees Brian Borella, Joe J. Martinez, and A berto P Miramontes began their storm patro shifts on State Rou te 330 in the San Bernardino Mountains where heavy rain had been falling for 24 hours Mudslides were occurring and rocks were fa ing onto the roadway at numerous locations. At approximate y 3 00 a.m. on December 22, due to the increasing severity of the situation, the men requested the route be closed for the safety of motorists They had been plowing continuously since their twe ve hour shifts began. One lane at the bottom of the road was c osed ear ier in the evening and vehicles were being escorted through. As the crew began c osing the route, there were still as many as 10-15 vehicles on the road with approximately 20 people inside. They realized they would have to lead the motorists out Severe slides over six feet high rendered the roadway impassab e in several locations and the men had to stop their vehicles, punch ho es in the mud and rock blockages and escort the motorists through. Large rocks were fa ing and striking the vehicles; debris was raining down on them as we The roadway was visibly failing in two locations, yet due to Mr Borella, Mr Martinez, and Mr Miramontes, everyone made it out safely The decision to request the road closure displayed Mr. Borella's, Mr Martinez's and Mr Miramontes's sense of duty and responsibi ity to the pub ic's trust Their decision to escort stranded motorists out of a deteriorating roadway during a major storm at great risk to their own safety demonstrated courage and commitment to the trave ing pub ic

Mark Mireles

Los Angeles Police Department, Officer

Other

1/5/2006

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On January 5, 2006, the Los Angeles Police Department and Los Angeles Fire Department responded to an attempted suicide. Officers Mark Mireles and Edwin Marron approached the 6th floor balcony where they reached the woman attempting to commit suicide. As she rolled off the edge of the balcony, Officer Mireles caught her by the leg and she tried to fight him off. Losing the struggle, Officer Mireles called to his partner, Officer Marron who grabbed his leg. Firefighter Schori then arrived and secured Officer Mireles' belt, pulling the two officers and the woman to safety

Michael Miscione

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

11/10/1993

Special Service Award (Silver)

While on patrol, Officer Miscione and Officer Peter Fennell spotted a young woman looking down at passing traffic on the Vermont Avenue crossing of the Hollywood Freeway (US 101). She was standing on the narrow outside flange and clinging to a 3 foot high bridge railing. An unending traffic stream there virtually assures a jumper of being struck by a vehicle upon contact with the roadway. At that moment an undercover LA police officer appeared. He began talking with the woman, trying to calm her down. The CHP car stopped, backed up and Officer Miscione slipped from the rear door and began to slowly walk up behind the woman, as yet unseen. She remained unaware of him until he got within five feet. Then, perhaps sensing his presence, she turned, looked at him and began lowering herself, as if preparing to jump. Realizing this was a critical moment, Officer Miscione lunged, his body and arms reaching far over the railing to grasp her arms and upper torso. The moved pulled him off balance and he struggled to hold on and regain sold footing. Winning the battle, Officer Miscione began to pull the woman upward. The Los Angeles Police officer rushed in to help bring her over the railing.

Christopher Mode

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/8/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officers Christopher Mode and Ericson Sherwood, on August 8, 2004, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at risk to their personal safety when they removed an incapacitated driver from a burning vehicle. At approximately 1:32 a.m. Mr. Jordan Marques was driving his vehicle at a high rate of speed southbound on Griffith Avenue, an unincorporated road near the city of Turlock in Stanislaus County. Officers Mode and Sherwood were traveling westbound on Bradbury Road. As they approached Griffith Avenue, both officers observed Mr. Marques' vehicle rapidly approaching the intersection from the north. Upon observing the officers, Mr. Marques braked abruptly and spun out of control coming to rest within the intersection. As Officers Mode and Sherwood initiated an enforcement stop, Mr. Marques accelerated away traveling at speeds of 80 to 100 MPH. In his attempt to traverse a rise in the roadway, Mr. Marques lost control and his vehicle became airborne. It veered west, off the roadway edge, and plummeted down a dirt embankment. Mr. Marques' vehicle came to rest after colliding with a power pole, which ignited a fire in the vehicle's engine compartment and surrounding tall, dry grass. As a result of the impact, Mr. Marques received serious injuries. His left leg was also pinned under the dashboard as the fire began to spread into the passenger compartment. Officers Mode and Ericson accessed the collision scene by driving the patrol vehicle along an adjacent dirt road. Despite the presence of dropped power lines, the vehicle fire, and heavy smoke, both officers approached the vehicle and attempted to extinguish the fire. As the fire spread to the passenger compartment, they redirected their efforts towards extricating Mr. Marques who remained pinned in the vehicle and unable to climb out on his own. The officers maintained their position and worked to dislodge Mr. Marques' left leg from under the dashboard on his vehicle which was now close to becoming fully engulfed. The officers freed Mr. Marques just as the fire had spread to his position in the vehicle. They pulled him through the driver side door frame, onto the ground, and to an area of safety. During the extrication, both officers and Mr. Marques were surrounded by flames, working in an area that also exposed them to the potential of being electrocuted from the dropped power lines. Officers Mode and Ericson exhibited great personal courage in their efforts to save the life of another. As a result of their life saving efforts, both suffered injuries that required medical treatment

Wayne Moeck

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

1/10/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 10, 2007, California Department of Transportation employees Wayne Moeck and Charles Russell were driving a Caltrans tow truck going east on the Coronado Bridge in San Diego when they saw black smoke on the horizon on the south side of the bridge and decided to see what they could do to help. They arrived on the scene and found children standing in front of a house, pointing towards the fire

Noticeably absent from the scene were any other adults and the fire department. Mr. Moeck entered the smoke-filled house and called out to check if anyone was in the house.

In the meantime, Mr Russell turned on the garden hose and was spraying water on the roof

After checking several rooms in the house, Mr. Moeck spotted three disoriented figures through the smoke and led them out to safety

Without a thought for their own personal safety, Mr Moeck and Mr Russell rescued a man, woman, and a dog from a burning house, saving them from injury or death

Travis Molina

Correctional Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

5/24/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 24, 2017, at 10:20 a.m. in the Pelican Bay State Prison outdoor exercise yard, holding approximately three hundred inmates, a one-on-one fight started. Correctional officers responded to the fight to stop the incident. While responding staff were attempting to quell the incident, approximately 130 inmates began rushing and attacking the officers. Officer Travis Molina was attacked by a mob of inmates. While fighting for his life, he could see that a fellow officer had been knocked to the ground and the inmates were hitting and kicking the downed officer. Officer Molina tried to get to the officer who was merely five feet away, but due to the large number of attacking inmates was not able to reach the now unconscious officer. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Molina's heroic act saved the lives of fellow officers and inmates in the face of a large prison fight. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctional Officer Travis Molina.

Kevin G. Monday

Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/17/1998

Special Service Award (Silver)

California Highway Patrol Officer Kevin G. Monday and Officer Gilbert L. Osuna, on October 17, 1998, performed an act of heroism at risk to their personal safety when they observed a three-story apartment building on fire and immediately initiated evacuation procedures. Officers Monday and Osuna, without personal protective equipment, were able to rescue seven elderly residents from second and third-floor apartments filled with dense smoke and flames.At approximately 8:15 p.m. Officers Monday and Osuna were on patrol in the City of San Bernardino when they observed a three-story apartment building on fire. Elderly and disabled individuals resided in the building. Officers Monday and Osuna were the first on the scene and immediately initiated evacuation procedures. Officers Monday and Osuna entered the burning building numerous times to evacuate the sleeping residents. These acts placed the officers' lives in danger as they were without personal protective equipment. Fire and rescue personnel arriving on the scene were unable to access the second and third floors due to dense smoke and flames inside the building. Officers Monday and Osuna assisted fire personnel by climbing ladders and rescuing the trapped residents crowded onto the balconies. Officers Monday and Osuna also provided oxygen and first aid to the injured residents. Once the evacuation of all the residents was completed, Officers Monday and Osuna continued to provide service to the displaced residents by assisting them onto a waiting bus which provided transportation to a nearby shelter. Only after all of the residents had been evacuated did the officers seek aid from their own injuries and smoke inhalation. Officers Monday and Osuna risked their lives to save the lives of the residents. It is clear Officers Monday and Osuna unselfishly placed their own safety aside in repeated valiant efforts to rescue the elderly residents of the apartment building. These actions demonstrate their commitment to providing protection and service to the citizens of this state and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the California Highway Patrol

Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/26/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 26, 2020 at 8:00 pm, California Highway Patrol Officer Verna Mondell was conducting a commercial vehicle strike force detail at the Interstate-80 eastbound Antelope Platform Scale Facility. While monitoring commercial traffic from inside the Antelope Platform Scale Facility, Officer Mondell heard a loud boom outside of the facility. Officer Mondell discovered a crash had occurred between a pickup truck and a tractor-trailer combination, 500 feet from the facility. She saw the pickup driver's door was open, with smoke filling the passenger compartment and a man slumped over in the front passenger seat. As the fire intensified, the flames began to transfer from the engine compartment to the passenger compartment near the driver's side door, preventing Officer Mondell from accessing the passenger through that door. Officer Mondell noticed the passenger's window was either broken or missing as she approached the vehicle. She leaned completely into the vehicle and attempted to pull the unconscious passenger out. Fearing she had no time left, nor the ability to check what may be ensnaring his legs, Officer Mondell made one last attempt to remove the passenger. She grabbed the passenger's pants around the rear left waistband with her left hand, and with her right hand grabbed his right shoulder, while bracing her left hip against the pickup truck. Officer Mondell successfully pulled the passenger out of the vehicle through the window, and dragged the passenger 75 feet from the burning pickup truck. Officer Mondell stayed with the victim until paramedics arrived. With no regard for her own safety, Officer Mondell went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Verna Mondell

Jacob Moniz

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/7/2011

Special Act Award (Gold)

On Apri 7, 2011, at approximate y 5 35 p m , Ca ifornia Highway Patrol Officer Jacob Moniz encountered a man walking on the right shoulder of the busy eastbound Interstate 10 in West Covina Using the patro vehicle's pub ic address system, Officer Moniz instructed the man to stop The man stopped initia y and then walked into the far right ane Officer Moniz left his vehicle, wa ked to the right shou der, and gave the man several clear instructions to come back to the right shoulder. The man seemed to comply by taking a few steps towards the Officer, then he sudden y turned and ran straight into traffic Without hesitation, Officer Moniz ran after the man, grabbed the back of his clothing and prevented him from running directly into the path of a passing big rig Upon questioning, the man revealed he intended to commit suicide.

Charles L. Monroe

Fish and Game Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

12/23/1964

Special Act Award (Gold)

Working together during the major 1964 December floods, Harold A. Caring and Charles L. Monroe lashed together three small boats to cross and re-cross the Eel River at Ferndale to rescue several stranded people. Huge logs, trees, entire houses and other debris constantly threatened the barely maneuverable boat.

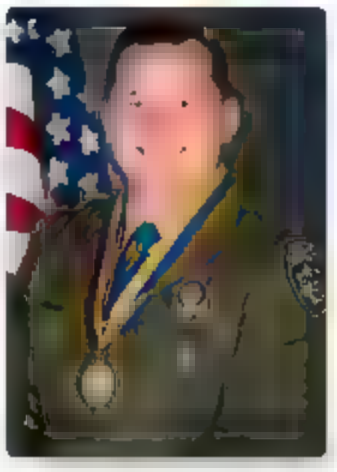
Timothy J. Montoya

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/13/2015

Special Service Award (Silver)



On Apri 13, 2015, at 3:53 a.m., Officer Timothy Montoya was on patrol with his partner, Officer Daryl Hansen, when they responded to a call of a vehicle on fire on an off ramp in the city of Santa Ana Upon Officer Montoya and Officer Hansen's arrival at the off ramp, they observed the vehic e engulfed in flames under a tree. Officer Hansen approached the vehic e and observed a man lying on the ground a few feet from the vehicle, with a toddler walking around him Officer Hansen immediate y moved toward the vehic e and observed a woman slumped forward in the front right passenger seat, her face badly bloodied,with numerous major acerations Officer Montoya attempted to open the driver side door, but the door was inoperable due to damage sustained during the collision. Meanwhile, Officer Hansen made several unsuccessfu attempts to remove the woman from the vehic e as the flames continued to grow. Officers Montoya and Hansen were ab e to grasp the woman and began to pull her through the open driver side window, despite the increasing heat and dangerously close flames. While removing her, Officer Montoya heard the sound of a crying baby from within the vehic e and stopped assisting Officer Hansen to investigate Officer Montoya located a baby on the floor behind the driver seat, and removed her from the vehic e whi e Officer Hansen continued his attempt to remove the woman, utilizing a of his strength and energy Officer Hansen was finally able to free the woman from the vehic e and pull her through the driver side window, placing her on the ground near the man and toddler. At this time, the surrounding brush and trees began to burn around the victims and officers Fina y, additional officers responded to the scene and assisted Officers Hansen and Montoya with moving the victims from the burning area to a safe location where medical aid could be provided

Timothy Mooney

Caltrans Equipment Operator

Department of Transportation

1/13/2007

Special Service Award (Silver)

On January 13, 2007, at approximately 6:30 a.m., California Department of Transportation employee Timothy Mooney was sanding the icy areas of the roadway between Hopland and Lakeport on Highway 175, when he noticed a vehicle located approximately fifty to eighty feet down a steep slope. Mr. Mooney got his flashlight and climbed down the hill in the dark to investigate. While at the scene, he heard a noise coming from the trunk of the vehicle. Mr. Mooney opened the trunk and discovered an injured man with severe head lacerations. Not knowing if the perpetrators were still in the area, Mr. Mooney contacted the California Highway Patrol and then assisted the man to a sitting position. The temperature was 17 degrees. To protect the man from the cold, Mr. Mooney gave him his raincoat. The Hopland Fire Department responded to the scene and airlifted the victim to the hospital, where he was hospitalized for a month for treatment of head trauma and hypothermia. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office is investigating this incident as a kidnapping and attempted murder case. Without a thought for his personal safety, on a freezing January morning, Mr. Mooney rescued a severely injured man trapped in the trunk of a car.

Richard 'Rick' L. Moore

Battalion Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/3/2006

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 3, 2006, CAL FIRE Battalion Chief Rick Moore responded to a fire which threatened a home and several out-buildings. Through very thick smoke, he saw a family in an area immediately threatened by the swift moving vegetation fire. He also saw a woman operating a riding lawn mower, who was attempting to remove dead vegetation from the perimeter of the property. He approached her and told her to stop and move to a position of safety, away from the fire. Believing she would follow his direction, he focused his attention on the other family members. He entered the house, and removed them to a safe, green-grassy area away from the fire, where they were shielded from the heat and smoky conditions. Chief Moore proceeded to return to his duties, but saw the woman on the riding mower had ignored his direction and was in immediate danger of being overrun by fire. He ran to her aid as the fire overran her and helped her to the ground, covering her with his body as the flames passed over them both. Chief Moore then summoned advanced life support resources and available personnel to assist him in treating the woman for burn and smoke inhalation injuries. Although he successfully aided the three family members, unfortunately the woman was unable to recover from her injuries. However, without the life-saving efforts of Chief Rick Moore, a greater loss of life might surely have been experienced.

Jason Moorhouse

Fire Apparatus Engineer/Paramedic

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/5/2011

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 5, 2011, at approximately 1:00 p.m., Fire Apparatus Engineer/Paramedic Jason Moorhouse was off-duty with his fiancé at a friend's house in Lakeport, when he noticed a dark column of smoke nearby and ran down the street to identify the source. When he arrived at a house six doors down, he saw a man with a garden hose attempting to extinguish a fire blowing out of a broken bedroom window. The man said his mother was still inside the burning home. Engineer Moorhouse asked his friends to call 911 and went to the front door. He was met with a wall of thick black smoke and heard a woman calling for help, saying she was lying on the kitchen floor. Wearing only shorts and flip-flops, Engineer Moorhouse and his friend attempted to enter the burning house, but they were hampered by the heat and smoke. The friend went to look for another way in and Engineer Morehouse's fiancé appeared with a towel to help with his breathing as he and another person again attempted to enter the burning house. Crawling on their stomachs, they located the 84 year old woman and dragged her to safety. Engineer Moorhouse began administering first aid as the woman was suffering from burns and smoke inhalation. She was transported by helicopter to the hospital where she was successfully treated for her serious injuries.

Heriberto Mora

Correctional Lieutenant

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

2/4/2021

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the morning of February 4, 2021, during their commute from Indio to Ironwood State Prison, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctional Lieutenant (Lt.) Heriberto Mora and his wife, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Registered Nurse Mayra Mora, came upon a car crash. They pulled over, and as trained first responders, began providing aid to the passengers of the mangled truck resting in a ditch along Interstate 10. The truck's driver had a head injury that was bleeding profusely, and a little girl was found outside of the truck. Another passenger was also found on the ground near the wrecked vehicle. Registered Nurse Mora took her husband's sweater and began treating the truck driver's head wound. She then calmed the young child, who did not appear injured. Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Sergeant John Bradley also stopped to lend aid to the crash victims. Lieutenant Mora noticed a car seat in the vehicle, and with Sergeant Bradley's assistance, the two broke open the rear passenger window, undid the baby harness, and got the baby out to safety. Meanwhile, Registered Nurse Mora treated the woman on the ground, keeping her stationary to avoid aggravating internal or neck injuries. Together, Lieutenant Heriberto Mora, Registered Nurse Mayra Mora, and Sergeant John Bradley stayed with the victims until firefighters and paramedics arrived. It is worth noting that other prison staff also stopped to help with bottles of water and blankets for the victims. Once the scene was stabilized, the Moras and Sergeant Bradley went off to work. With no regard for his own safety, Correctional Lieutenant Mora went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctional Lieutenant Heriberto Mora.

Mayra Mora

Registered Nurse

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

2/4/2021

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the morning of February 4, 2021, during their commute from Indio to Ironwood State Prison, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctional Lieutenant (Lt.) Heriberto Mora and his wife, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Registered Nurse Mayra Mora, came upon a car crash. They pulled over and as trained first responders, began providing aid to the passengers of the mangled truck resting in a ditch along Interstate 10. The truck's driver had a head injury that was bleeding profusely, and a little girl was found outside of the truck. Another passenger was also found on the ground near the wrecked vehicle. Registered Nurse Mora took her husband's sweater and began treating the truck driver's head wound. She then calmed the young child, who did not appear injured. Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Sergeant John Bradley also stopped to lend aid to the crash victims. Lieutenant Mora noticed a car seat in the vehicle, and with Sergeant Bradley's assistance, the two broke open the rear passenger window, undid the baby harness, and got the baby out to safety. Meanwhile, Registered Nurse Mora treated the woman on the ground, keeping her stationary to avoid aggravating internal or neck injuries. Together, Lieutenant Heriberto Mora, Registered Nurse Mayra Mora, and Sergeant John Bradley stayed with the victims until firefighters and paramedics arrived. It is worth noting that other prison staff also stopped to help with bottles of water and blankets for the victims. Once the scene was stabilized, the Moras and Sergeant Bradley went off to work. With no regard for her own safety, Registered Nurse Mora went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Registered Nurse Moyra Mora.

John Moraga

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

6/27/1985

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 5 30 a m on June 27, 1985, two truck and trailer combinations collided on northbound Interstate 5 north of the Westley on-ramp One of the vehicles was leaking liquid hazardous waste. As Officer Moraga was attempting to clear the roadway, two other large trucks collided near the first accident. One of the trucks broke in half and exploded in a ball of flames The officer was knocked to the ground by the explosion, injuring his knee, and narrowly escaping incineration in burning diesel fuel. Despite his injury, Officer Moraga approached the demolished truck cab with its sleeping compartment ablaze, expecting to find the driver dead. Instead, the trucker was alive, but pinned down by the steering column. Despite the great heat from the burning cab and the danger of another explosion, Officer Moraga and a citizen tried to free the trapped driver. Finally their efforts were successful, but the shocked trucker just lay on the ground, unwilling to move. Officer Moraga screamed at the driver "Get up or we are all going to die where we stand!" The trucker struggled to his hands and knees and all three men made it to safety.

Alfonso Moreno

Fire Apparatus Operator

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

12/8/2020

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the morning of December 8, 2020, Fire Apparatus Engineer Alfonso "Al" Moreno responded to a house fire in Indio. As the fire intensified, conditions quickly deteriorated and all firefighters were ordered to evacuate the building. During the retreat, there was a partial roof collapse and other fire conditions that separated the firefighters from each other and the hose line. Engineer Moreno heard a "MAYDAY" call over the radio. Realizing a missing firefighter was still inside of the building, he returned to the burning structure to assist in the rescue. Engineer Moreno entered the home under extremely heavy fire conditions. He quickly located the trapped firefighter, who was in severe distress, thrashing about in the den disoriented. Engineer Moreno wrestled the injured firefighter to the floor and tried to orient him to the hose line and out to safety. During the next several moments of confusion, an additional firefighter came to assist in the rescue. Due to the extreme fire conditions, Engineer Moreno was mistaken for the missing firefighter and was forcefully removed from the building. Engineer Moreno was drug out of the building and into the front yard, where he was able to identify that he was not the missing firefighter. Engineer Moreno quickly situated his gear, saw that he was injured, but still charged back towards the structure to assist in the rescue. However, by this time, a Fire Captain and several other firefighters had removed the severely burned and injured firefighter. Engineer Moreno assisted in the injured firefighter's treatment. Unaware of the severity of his injures, Engineer Moreno even drove the ambulance to the hospital to allow additional paramedics to attend to the victim. With no regard for his own safety, Mr. Moreno went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Apparatus Engineer Alfonso Moreno.

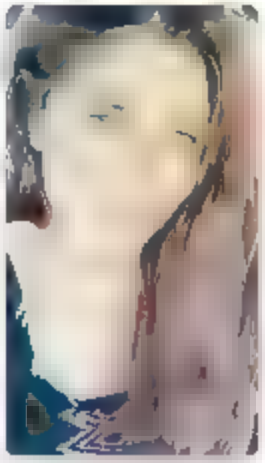
Camille Morgan

Senior Legal Typist

Department of Industrial Relations

9/15/2021

Special Service Award (Silver)



On the morning of September 15, 2021, a Department of Industrial Relations employee gasped out and collapsed in the middle of her office space. The victim's colleagues leapt into action. Senior Legal Typist Karla Castro began chest compressions and administering CPR. Senior Legal Typist Cristi Valencia then took over to administer chest compressions and CPR. Following Ms. Valencia, Senior Legal Typist Camille Morgan took a turn to administer chest compressions and CPR. Additional staff comforted the employee, called the police, and retrieved the AED machine. As paramedics arrived, and after forty harrowing minutes of attempting to rescue the employee, the employee passed away. With no regard for her own safety, Senior Legal Typist Morgan went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Industrial Relations Senior Legal Typist Camille Morgan.

Shawn Morgan

Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor

Department of Transportation

12/28/2016

Special Service Award (Silver)

Around midnight on December 28, 2016, a vehicle traveling on Hwy 50 left the roadway, became airborn, and landed upside down quite a distance off the highway in the American River. In the vehicle was a family of four. Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor Shawn Morgan had just gotten off duty from the Kyburz Maintenance Yard and was heading home when he noticed a group of vehicles parked off the roadway along with several people on the shoulder of the road. He turned his vehicle around to determine what had happened and to see if he could help. It was then that on-lookers told him there was a car on its roof in the river and they believed there were people trapped inside. Mr. Morgan called the Traffic Management Center, as well as the Kyburz Maintenance Yard for help. On-lookers had already called 911. He climbed down over the snowy, icy rocks and boulders, and reached the upturned car. Mr. Morgan assisted a young female passenger up to on-lookers. He then assisted the adult female passenger up the boulders to on-lookers, instructing them to put her in a car to warm her up. Once the car was uprighted, Mr. Morgan assisted the adult male driver to the river bank. He was in no condition to be moved further. When the boy was brought to the river bank, Mr. Morgan assisted with CPR, and with transporting him up to the ambulance once emergency personnel arrived. All victims were taken to the hospital but the boy did not survive. The night this happened, although it wasn't snowing at the time, there was an accumulation of snow on the ground and the temperature was in the 20's. With no regard for his own safety, Mr. Morgan's heroic service saved three lives. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor Shawn Morgan.

Cory Morning

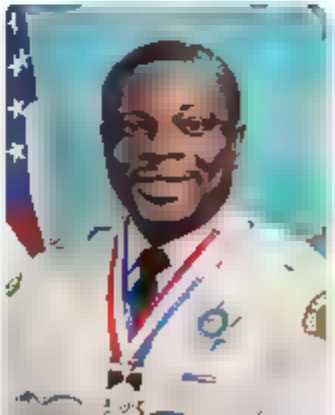
Los Angeles County Sheriff, Deputy

Other

10/31/2006

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On October 31, 2006, Deputy Morning responded to a fallen assault victim and was fired on by a nearby gunman without warning. After Deputy Morning retreated from the deadly gunfire to safety, he then moved back into the line of fire to protect the safety of nearby onlookers and his fellow deputies, where he engaged and fatally wounded the gunman.



Jeffrey M. Morris

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/24/1992

Special Act Award (Gold)

State Traffic Officers Jeffrey M Morris and Jose R. Palacio, Jr , on September 24, 1992, performed acts of heroism at great risk to their personal safety to rescue thirty-one tenants from burning buildings. On the date noted above, at approximately 1:12 a.m. Officers Morris and Palacio observed a large column of smoke in the vicinity of Belmont Avenue and Broadway, Fresno The Officers observed a carport area located between two multistory buildings engulfed in flames. Only moments after arriving one of the vehicles in the carport exploded. The fire then began to rapidly spread to the rest of the carport and to adjacent buildings. Officer Morris entered the first building and ran up to the third floor where most of the smoke was located He began shouting and beating on doors to arouse and advise the tenants of the fire. Officer Morris went to each apartment, rapidly checking to see if it was open or occupied. Although the hall was filling with smoke, he continued in this manner until the floor was cleared and began escorting people to safety, Officer Morris then went to the second and first floor and repeated his efforts Meanwhile Officer Palacio notified CHP dispatch and then ran to the front of the building. One person said there was another building in which the tenants might not be able to get out. Officer Palacio ran to the specified building and entered it. Although he could hardly breathe or see, Officer Palacio started banging on doors and yelling that there was a fire. As the people were leaving, he checked behind them until he was forced out by the smoke and flames. When he was outside, the manager said that everyone had been evacuated but another building needed to be evacuated. Officer Palacio then ran to that building an notified the tenants to evacuate. Once that was accomplished, he ran back to the other building Officer Morris was in and assisted him in checking the first floor. Together they prevented tenants from going back in the buildings and waited for the fire department to arrive. Due to the Officers' quick actions, they were able to prevent any fatalities or injuries from the fire which became a full second alarm incident.

Michael Morris

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/30/1987

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 30, 1987, California Highway Patrol Officer Michael Morris, in a heroic effort at great risk to his safety and life, hung upside down from a freeway overcrossing, his leg held only by a volunteer, trying to grab and restrain a mentally unstable man about to jump

Barry Morrison

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

4/20/2011

Special Service Award (Silver)

On April 20, 2011, at approximately 7:45 a.m., Caltrans Equipment Operator II Barry Morrison was completing a routine snow removal operation on a closed section of State Route 2 in the Angeles National Forest when he noticed an object that appeared to be a bear. As he got closer he saw it was a woman, waving her arms for assistance. The woman had run out of gas while taking a drive and attempted to walk twenty miles to town. She had no cell phone reception and soon the battery died. During her trek, she slipped and fell down an icy embankment and was injured. She spent a freezing night in the snow with no jacket and only sandals on her feet. The next day she attempted to scale the embankment because she knew she would die if she did not try to rescue herself. Mr. Morrison climbed over an eight foot snow drift and then hiked down the icy embankment to reach the woman. Once he reached her, he saw that she was barefoot, bloody, exhausted, and very cold. The temperature was in the 30's and there had been a large snow storm the day before. Mr. Morrison went to his vehicle and retrieved food and clothing. Additional Caltrans Equipment Operators arrived on the scene and Mr. Morrison left the woman in their care while he drove to a location with cellphone service to call for medical assistance. The woman, suffering from hypothermia and frostbite as well as numerous cuts and abrasions, was soon airlifted to safety.

Bonnie Morse

State Park Technician

Department of Parks and Recreation

6/11/1984

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 11, 1984, State Park Technician Bonnie Morse responded to a report of a capsized boat in the Salton Sea with three elderly fishermen, imperiled by strong waves, calling for help. After requesting backup, Ms. Morse rushed to Sneakers Beach where she observed one of the victims clinging to a floatation cushion approximately 25 yards from shore. Without hesitation, Ms. Morse entered the water and brought the man safely to shore. Leaving him in the care of others, she again entered the water and with the floatation cushion swam out to rescue his companions who were clinging to the bow of the boat approximately 100 yards from shore. Upon reaching the victims, she kept them calm with words of encouragement while a rescue boat maneuvered into position. As the boat drew closer, Ms. Morse grabbed the mooring line, assisted in positioning the boat, and helped lift both men safely into the rescue craft.

James Mower

Fire Fighter

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/19/1970

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 19, 1970, Fire Fighter James C. Mower performed and extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his own personal safety and life by saving the life of an individual trapped inside a century-old mine shaft. Five Division of Forestry employees were awarded the Medal of Valor for their participation in what was described as the "Most difficult and dangerous operation of rescuing an unconscious man " 130 feet below the surface and 2000 feet from the entrance of the century-old Hazard Mine on Volcano Creek near Foresthill in Placer County, California. The incident occurred when Clifford J. Cox, age 60, one of the mine owners and his nephew, Richard Ward, entered the mine on an exploration trip Mr. Cox was apparently overcome by lack of air and fell unconscious; the younger Mr. Ward barely escaped himself. Mr. Ward summoned help from the Foresthill Forest Fire Station. Assistant State Forest Rangers Campbell, Dougherty, Fire Apparatus Engineers Hamilton, Quigley and Fire Fighter Mower responded to the call for help. A rescue plan was formulated which eventually included other Division of Forestry personnel, inmates from the Iron Mountain Conservation Camp and volunteers who assisted in the rescue efforts. One volunteer. Lester Benbow, died during the rescue.

Theodore Mrozek

Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/4/1974

Special Act Award (Gold)

When Officer Theodore Mrozek arrived at the scene of an accident involving a gasoline tank truck and a passenger vehicle, gasoline from the tank truck was burning 25 to 30 feet from the car and there were two elderly persons trapped inside. The heat was intense - estimated at 500 to 800 degrees - that it was impossible to approach the car. Officer Mrozek requested the fireman spray water on himself and two civilians so they could get to the car and remove the injured driver and his unconscious wife. Fire officials reported that throughout the rescue operation there was imminent danger from the fierce heat and a possible explosion of gasoline in the tank truck and trainer.

Craig Muehleisen

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/19/1990

Special Service Award (Silver)

State Traffic Officers Craig E Muehleisen, Thomas R Greenstone, and Annette Hirschi on January 19, 1990, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to their personal safety and life in rescuing a woman and a ten-year-old child from a burning wooden residence. At approximately 0100 hours Officers Greenstone and Hirschi were entering Interstate 5 northbound in the city of Leucadia when they observed thick smoke near a gasoline station located west of the freeway Upon arriva at the location they observed thick smoke coming from the two-story house next to the gasoline station. Observing flames inside the rear portion of the house, the officers began ye ing to a ert any occupants. Within seconds, a fema e exited down the outside stairway As officers escorted her to safety she was unable to confirm whether others were in the house. Officer Greenstone proceeded to work his way through thick smoke outside the residence to a partia y opened door. Hearing coughing and crying sounds coming from the room, he entered the room on his hands and knees. With only an 18" air space he moved through the dense smoke to an area near the far corner where he thought he saw a bed Unable to locate anyone and overcome by smoke he was forced to retreat Unwi ing to give up, both Officers Hirschi and Greenstone made two more attempts to ocate any occupants, before being forced to retreat. Refreshed, Officer Hirschi entered the room again, and within seconds the beam of her flash ight i uminated a white object moving on the floor approximately five feet away As she approached the object she saw it was a chi d Grabbing her around the waist, she dragged her toward the exit. As she reached the door, Officer Greenstone took the child and handed her to Officer Muehleisen, who had just arrived on the scene. Upon being advised that there were probably more people inside, Officer Muehleisen approached the open door. Despite the ever present danger with windows popping and the ceiling ablaze and a tremendous amount of heat being generated by the flames, he placed a scarf around his face, knelt down and craw ed into the room. Forced back twice by the smoke and flames, the officers moved away from the burning structure

Mitchell Mueller

Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/17/1989

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 5 00 pm, Officer Mue er was conducting an undercover surveillance in the area of the I-880 Cypress Freeway Overpass when the Loma Prieta earthquake struck. Officer Mue er responded immediate y to the disaster scene, utilized his emergency medical technician skills to provide emergency medical care and established a triage area at ground level. After assisting numerous injured persons on the ground, Officer Mue er commandeered a forklift to lift him onto the upper deck of the unstable structure and assist numerous peop e to a place of safety below. Frequent aftershocks were occurring and the structure continued to settle. Without regard for his own safety, Officer Mueller crawled into an area of the collapsed structure where the clearance had been reduced to a height of approximately three feet Among the broken glass and rubb e, the officer located two serious y injured victims trapped in separate vehic es and dragged each of them to a place of safety on top of the structure. Officer Mueller then joined the victims and provided lifesaving assistance until emergency medical personal arrived at the scene.

William Mulkeen

Firefighter

Other

1/1/2011

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On January 1, 2011, at 1 30 a m , Firefighter William Mulkeen and other San Francisco Fire Department personnel were dispatched to an active fire of a three-story multi-residential building. Upon arrival, the fire truck was unable to park in a manner to deploy the truck's high rise ladder Smoke was pouring from the top of the building and while a perimeter check was conducted two elderly people were seen frantically waving their arms and pleading for help from a third story window. An immediate rescue of the trapped residents was needed. As is one of the vital skill-sets of California's firefighters, San Francisco Fire Department personnel quickly improvised another rescue plan due to the unavailability of the truck's ladder As critical time hung in the balance, Firefighter Mulkeen, his captain and another firefighter took action. The triad used a portable 24-foot ladder and rope to "bridge" the ladder over an alley located between the burning structure and the roof of the adjacent building. While the Captain lowered the ladder into the window where the two elderly people were trapped, the other firefighter anchored the ladder Firefighter Mulkeen who was wearing full firefighter safety equipment then crawled across the make-shift bridge ladder in between the two buildings to rescue the trapped residents. When Firefighter Mulkeen reached the two people, they were emotionally overcome by smoke, fearful of crawling across the ladder due the concrete alley below and were now uncooperative. Firefighter Mulkeen removed his turnout coat and wrapped it around the first victim in order to restrict his movement. He then removed his self-contained breathing apparatus, grabbed the man and carried the man while crawling back across the ladder. Once again, Firefighter Mulkeen put himself in harm's way and returned across the ladder to rescue the second trapped person who was also uncooperative. He repeated the same actions and without hesitation, he carried her across the ladder to the roof of the adjacent building. Due to Firefighter Mulkeen's extraordinary bravery, both residents' lives were saved.

Timothy Murphy

State Park Lifeguard

Department of Parks and Recreation

4/6/1996

Special Act Award (Gold)

On Apri 6, 1996, State Park Supervising Ranger Michae Stephenson and State Park Lifeguard Timothy Murphy, both off duty, responded separately to a report of a surfer stranded on a rock and waving for he p at Sonoma State Beach. Upon arrival, Ranger Stephenson was able to get a glimpse of the stranded man just before darkness set in. The extreme y strong surf, fog, and darkness precluded the use of paddleboards, boats or helicopters: the rescue could only be accomplished by swimming out to the victim in the 50 degree water. Ranger Stephenson and Lifeguard Murphy put on their swim fins and surfing style wetsuits which would keep them warm for only about 20 minutes and swam the half mile to the victim Despite tota darkness and strong currents, the rescuers were able to get the man safely off the rock Because the prevailing current was carrying them toward a prominent rock outcropping being pounded by heavy waves, the rescuers, in total darkness, had to tow the man to shore against the current using a rescue buoy After forty minutes, they reached the point just seaward of the pounding surf. A light powered by a generator guided them to the general direction of the shore, however upon arriving on shore, the light suddenly went out. At this point a three were picked up and crushed by a twelve foot wave, causing Ranger Stephenson and Lifeguard Murphy to lose contact with the victim. Lifeguard Murphy was abe to quickly grab the victim and get him to safely on shore; Ranger Stephenson however, was sucked back into the water and struck repeatedly by large waves before making it to the beach. The rescuers had been in the ocean for approximate y two and half hours. Once safely on shore, the rescuers and the surfer were examined by paramedics and released.

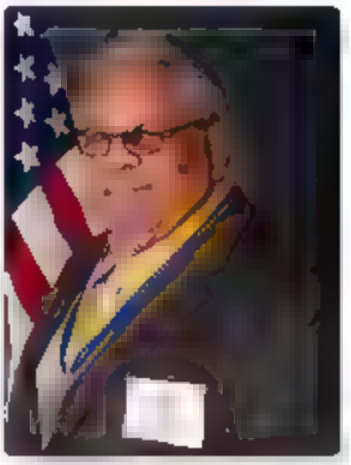
James Murrieta

Associate Right of Way Agent

Department of Transportation

5/1/2012

Special Act Award (Gold)



On May 1, 2012, at approximately 3:30 p.m. Associate Right of Way Agent James Murrieta was driving home in Fresno County when he glanced in his rear view mirror and saw a car veering off the road. He called 911 then turned around to help. As he drove to the site, he did not see a car, but he saw wheels above the water line in a canal and a young couple told him that their children were trapped in the submerged vehicle. Mr. Murrieta went into the water to look for an opening in the car. The children's father and another bystander also jumped in, but the car doors were jammed shut. The car was completely upside down in the water. The pleas for help from the parents were getting stronger and Mr. Murrieta was worried the children would drown, so he went under water, and with the aid of the Good Samaritan, rolled the car onto its side, exposing the right passenger doors. The father was able to free his six year old son, and as Mr. Murrieta held the vehicle from rolling back, the Good Samaritan removed the one year old girl from her car seat. Both children were unresponsive at first, so resuscitation efforts began. The children were just starting to respond as assistance arrived.

Andrew Murrill

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/29/2016

Special Service Award (Silver)

On January 29, 2016, at 4:05 p.m., California Highway Patrol Officer Andrew Murrill and Officer Kevin Manford, responded to a call of a traffic collision with an ambulance responding. Upon their arrival, they observed a man walking along the bank of Canyon Creek. The man stated he had lost control of his vehicle and it was upside down in Canyon Creek. He also stated his passenger was trapped in the vehicle. Without hesitation, Officer Manford, Officer Murrill, and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Equipment Operator II James Anderson waded across approximately 20 feet of waist deep, swift moving, icy cold water, to the trapped woman's location. They observed her to be nearly unresponsive, bleeding profusely, confused, and exhibiting signs of hypothermia. Mr. Anderson cut the woman's seat belt, and with great effort while struggling against the strong current, Officers Manford and Murrill, and Mr. Anderson extricated her from the vehicle and began to carry her across the creek. As they carried her across the creek, Mr. Anderson lost his footing on the rocky creek bed, fell into the water, and began to travel downstream. While maintaining control of the woman, Officers Manford and Murrill, with help from Caltrans Equipment Operator II Kenneth Meyers, reached out and held onto Mr. Anderson, preventing him from being swept downstream. Mr. Meyers helped Mr. Anderson to his feet and out of the creek. The officers then carried the woman up the steep embankment and over the metal guardrail. Officer Manford covered the woman in a blanket and placed her in the rear of a California Highway Patrol vehicle. Officers Murrill and Manford provided medical treatment to the woman until relieved by Cal Fire personnel. As a result of this traffic collision, the woman suffered from hypothermia, a fractured right rib, and lacerations to her left leg and right arm.

Justin Musella

Detective

Department of Justice

2/12/2021

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On February 12, 2013 a team of deputies had tracked fugitive Christopher Dorner to cabin in the snowy Angeles Oak terrain. Charged with home invasion, Dorner had spent the previous week avoiding capture and exchanging fire with law enforcement, killing on Riverside Police officer Barricaded in the cabin, Dorner shot two more deputies who'd been approaching the cabin. After witnessing Dorner shoot two more deputies who'd been approaching the cabin, deputies Musella, Lopez, and Ross shot suppressing fire to prevent Dorner from further shooting at the downed men. Musella and Ross deployed smoke canisters to conceal the downed deputies. To gain tactical advantage, Musella ran 50 yards in the open to a nearby building while Lopez and Ross rushed from cover to drag the down officers to safety Tragically one of the wounded officers succumbed to his injuries and died However, the other deputy survived and has fully recovered and returned to work

Kenneth L. Myatt

State Traffic Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

8/31/1974

Special Act Award (Gold)

State Traffic Officer Michael R Gotfried and State Traffic Sergeant Kenneth L. Myatt on August 31, 1974, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to their own safety and life in saving the life of another person. In the late afternoon of August 31, 1974, Officer Michael R Gotfried was traveling westbound on the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge when he observed an automobile parked in a turnout a short distance west of the Yerba Buena Island Tunnel As he slowed to investigate, he saw a man walking toward the guard rail. Quickly parking his car, he ran calling after the man as the man climbed the railing and disappeared from sight.

The officer returned to his car and radioed to report the incident. Officer Gotfried found the would-be suicide working his way along a narrow painter's scaffold six feet below The scaffold widened to 30 inches at its far end and was rimmed only along its outer edge and at the broad end by a single one-inch pipe railing approximately four feet high. The platform was mounted to and operated along a six inch wide I-beam running track at floor level. This slim beam provided the only obstacle to fall through the two and one-half feet of space between the scaffold and bridge The island's rocky shore was 200 feet below Officer Gotfried climbed the railing and dropped to the I-beam where he inched his way to reach the platform By now the man had stepped around the railing's end and appeared ready to let go The officer cautiously moved forward and when he got close to the man he grabbed his arm. All attempts to pull him fully behind the railing were unsuccessful, however, the officer managed to hold his position even though the large, extremely strong man made repeated attempts to get back around the railing so he could jump. Eight minutes later Sergeant Myatt arrived at the scene. For more than half an hour the officers talked to the man, often struggling with him when he would suddenly pull on the railing and try to force his way around it to the open side In desperation, Sergeant Myatt straddled the gap between the I-beam and their perilous perch to provide more room for the two officers to restrain the man Finally, they were able to bring him to his knees and in this extremely dangerous position below the railing, forced his arms behind his back and handcuffed him Using stretcher straps to form a harness and with the aid of Treasure Island hospital corpsmen holding on tightly from above, the officers slowly guided the now crying man across the void and raised him upward to a horizontal position as they passed him through the narrow opening between the bridge cable and railing to safety

Kenneth Myers

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

12/28/2022

Special Service Award (Silver)

On December 28, 2022, surrounded by mountainous terrain and steep drop-offs, Equipment Operator II Ken Myers was patrolling his area in the Sierras on eastbound I-80 between Drum Forebay Road and Blue Canyon when he spotted smoke just above the exit. Mr. Myers immediately responded to the location and found a vehicle on fire. Five of the six passengers were outside of the car. Some were wandering around while the others were lying on the ground, bloodied and injured. One was almost scalped with severe cuts on his head. With a language barrier impacting communication, Mr. Myers went directly to the door of the vehicle and found the driver trapped and semi-conscious. Flames were quickly rising around and under the vehicle's hood and dash. He hastily grabbed a fire extinguisher from his truck and set to work on putting the flames out. Shortly after, colleagues Equipment Operator II Bruce Perry and Darrel VanNatta arrived on the scene to assist in battling the fire. Their combined efforts kept the fire at bay long enough to allow CAL FIRE to arrive and extinguish the fire before cutting the injured driver out of the car. The heroic acts of the three Caltrans employees—jumping into harm's way, approaching the burning car and extinguishing flames while not knowing if the car would explode—were remarkable. This quick action from a trio of Whitmore Maintenance crew members is credited for saving the life of the driver. A Placer County Fire Department Captain stated that he believes with 100 percent certainty that if the Caltrans employees were not there providing lifesaving efforts, the driver of the vehicle would have perished or suffered life-altering burn injuries. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation, Caltrans Equipment Operator II Ken Myers for his heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty

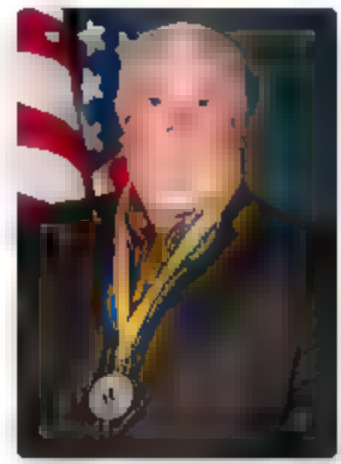
Kenneth V. Myers

Equipment Operator

Department of Transportation

1/29/2016

Special Service Award (Silver)



On January 29, 2016, at 4:05 p.m., it was very wet and rainy, when a white pickup truck struck a guardrail on westbound I-80, left the roadway, overturned, and rolled down the steep embankment, landing upside down in Canyon Creek below. While the driver was able to get out, the female passenger was trapped inside. A Caltrans sand truck saw the incident and put out a call for help. Caltrans Equipment Operator II James Anderson was nearby and arrived at the scene along with California Highway Patrol Officers Andy Murrill and Kevin Manford. As the three men went into the rushing water to rescue the woman, Ca Trans Equipment Operator Kenneth Myers climbed down the steep embankment to provide assistance. Just as Mr. Anderson neared the bank carrying the visibly injured, bleeding and nearly unresponsive passenger, he lost his footing, putting himself, the woman and the officers in danger of being swept downstream. Mr. Myers reacted by grabbing a branch and wading into the water. He managed to grab Mr. Anderson by the belt and pull him, and thereby the others, back to safety. Mr. Myers' quick actions prevented them all from being carried off down the creek and into a several hundred foot long culvert pipe taking the rushing water underneath Interstate 80. Mr. Myers' assistance, and the assistance of Ca trans Maintenance Supervisor Rodney Walker, ensured the panicked woman got out of the water and up the very steep embankment to safety and medical attention.

Scott Myers

Sergeant

Department of Justice

4/12/2012

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On April 12, 2012, responding to reports of shoots fired and officers down, Sergeant Patrick Kimes, along with ten other officers of the Modesto police department, arrived on scene to find Stanislaus County Sheriff's Deputy Bob Paris and civilian locksmith Glendon Engert lying unconscious outside the front door leading to the suspect's apartment front door. Armed with an arsenal, the suspect had barricaded himself inside his apartment and exchanging fire with a second deputy, Deputy Mike Glinskas, who was pinned down and had issued the call for help. Placing ballistic shields across the front passenger window of a Modesto police car, a group of officers took cover on the driver's side and used the vehicle as mobile cover to advance on the apartment while the remaining officers deployed a flash bang diversionary device. Their coordinated efforts were successful in that they were able to extract Glinskas and escort him to safety and medical attention. They were also able to recover Paris and Engert, both of whom had unfortunately been mortally wounded.

After an eleven hour standoff, the suspect took his own life. Because of actions of Sergeant Kimes and his fellow officers, prevented the deadly standoff from escalating further and thereby threatening more lives.

Kathy Myles-Daniels

Manager I

Department of Motor Vehicles

3/2/2011

Special Service Award (Silver)

On March 2, 2011, at approximate y 12 15 p m , a man was causing a disturbance in the Hawthorne DMV and Manager I, Conrad Rivarde, asked him to .eave Instead of leaving however, he jumped on the .edge of a workstation saying "they are going to kill me!" Mr Rivarde approached the man and demanded he get down A though the man initially complied, within seconds he jumped back on the ledge and fell backwards into the work area, got up and started running around. 911 received over 20 different calls about the man from customers within the DMV. Mr. Rivarde caught up with and grabbed the man who appeared disorientated and paranoid The man broke free and started running towards the rear of the work area, looking behind him as if someone was chasing him. He grabbed a female manager and held her in front of him like a shield and then shoved her away. In an effort to apprehend the man, Mr Rivarde tack ed him and they struggled on the floor The man struck Mr Rivarde in the face and escaped. Manager I, Kathy My es-Danie s, intervened by grabbing the man and telling him to calm down while advising staff to clear the area Licensing Registration Examiner Geoffrey Holmes was returning back to the office after administering a driving exam and was informed about the situation taking place inside. Mr. Holmes ran into the building, saw Ms Myles-Danie s struggling with the man, and approached to assist with the situation Rea izing they were in close proximity to a stockroom, Ms. Myles-Danie s, Mr Rivarde, Mr Ho mes and a security guard put the man inside the stockroom and together they restrained him until police arrived. The man was arrested and found to be under the influence of narcotics.

Sean A. Nava

Officer

California Highway Patrol

6/15/1999

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Sean A. Nava, on June 15, 1999 performed an extraordinary act of heroism while off duty at risk to his life when he attempted to free the driver of a vehicle which left the roadway, struck a propane tank, and burst into flames. On June 15, 1999, at 9:35 p.m. on Old Castle Road, 9 miles east of Old Highway 395, in an incorporated area of San Diego County, off-duty Officer Sean Nava, encountered a solo traffic collision. The vehicle, driven by Mr. Eleazar F. Santaana, ran off the road, hitting a residence and a propane tank, and burst into flames. Mr. Santaana was unconscious, and trapped inside the vehicle. Officer Nava notified the California Highway Patrol Dispatch Center, and provided vital information to responding emergency personnel. Without regard to his own personal safety, Officer Nava along with a citizen, made repeated attempts to free the trapped driver from the vehicle. Due to the intensity of the fire, and the fact that the driver's legs were pinned inside of the wreckage, Officer Nava was unable to extricate the driver before the vehicle became completely engulfed in flames.

Leonardo Antonio Necochea, Sr.

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

6/24/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 24, 2010, at approximately 2:00 p.m., Caltrans employees Arthur Grijalva, Tommy Neri, Pedro Vasquez, Pablo Diaz, and Leonardo Necochea were traveling on Interstate 8 in the Jacumba area of San Diego County when they came upon an accident. A van had overturned in the median and landed upright on its wheels starting a small brush fire. Mr. Neri and Mr. Necochea rushed to the vehicle and found an unconscious woman in the driver's seat. Mr. Diaz and Mr. Vasquez quickly began attempts to extinguish the fire. In an effort to prevent additional traffic collisions, Mr. Grijalva began directing traffic. While Mr. Neri and Mr. Necochea were administering first aid, they noticed the fire was getting out of control and approaching the vehicle. With the help of Mr. Diaz and Mr. Vasquez, they rigged a backboard from a portion of the wrecked vehicle, cut the woman's seatbelt, placed her on the backboard, and safely removed her from the vehicle to a secure location. Within minutes after removing the woman, the vehicle went up in flames. Mr. Neri and Mr. Necochea stayed with the woman and provided additional first aid while the others began assisting Mr. Grijalva with traffic control until help arrived. The actions of the Caltrans employees, without regard for their own safety, saved the woman's life. The State of California takes great pride in presenting Arthur Grijalva this Silver Medal of Valor, and Tommy Neri, Pablo Diaz, Leonardo Necochea, and Pedro Vasquez these Gold Medals of Valor, for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the call of duty.

Charles W. Neer

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/25/1971

Special Act Award (Gold)

Officer Charles W Neer came upon the scene of three car accident on Interstate Highway 10. One of the vehic es was on fire. Having radioed for fire equipment, ambulance and traffic contro assistance, he grabbed a flashlight and crowbar and rushed to the flaming vehic e. The driver was still inside, however the driver's door was jammed and Officer Neer found he couldn't open the passenger door either With the aid of a young man and the crowbar, he broke the front passenger compartment window. Just then the heat exploded the right rear tire and the surging flames forced the rescuers back. As the effects of the explosion diminished, the two men forced their way to the car and pulled the injured man out through the window. Almost simultaneously, the fire moved from the backseat to the front and the car became a raging inferno.

Gregory Nelson

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/11/1996

Special Act Award (Gold)

Officer Greg Nelson was serving with the Freeway Service Patrol when he received a call that a man appeared ready to jump from the Vermont overcrossing. Noting it was only one block away, Officer Nelson ran from the CHP office to the scene. Arriving on the bridge, Officer Nelson found himself behind the suicidal man who was now hanging onto the railing by one hand, his attention held by three ambulance employees at the opposite end. Officer Nelson saw a distraught, sobbing teenager, well dressed and wearing a large backpack. The three medics watched as the officer moved cautiously into position. They held the man's attention with verbal reassurances and hand gestures which Officer Nelson correctly identified as diversions to help him move in undetected. Officer Nelson was approximately eight feet away when his radio unexpectedly beeped and the young man turned, saw Officer Nelson and jumped. Officer Nelson lunged to grab the man and grasped the backpack strap that was beneath the man's armpit and around his neck. The young man's weight took Officer Nelson off his feet. His knee slammed into to the rail and they both nearly went over. Officer Nelson held onto the backpack strap with one hand and the railing with his other hand until the ambulance employees got there and helped him bring him up.

James Patrick Nelson

Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/25/1971

Special Act Award (Gold)

Traffic Officer James Patrick Nelson was patrolling Highway 20 near Clear Lake when he saw a boat explode in flames, throwing the five occupants into the water. He swam out to the accident scene, placed life preservers around three of the victims and towed a woman and young child safely to shore.

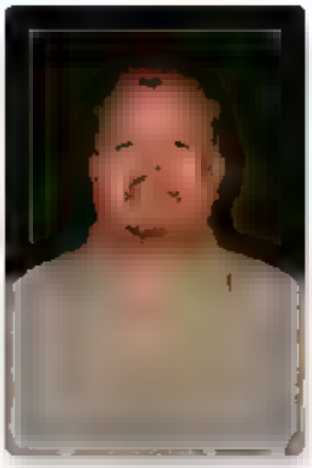
Tommy A. Neri

Caltrans Highway Maintenance Lead Worker

Department of Transportation

6/24/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)



On June 24, 2010, at approximately 2:00 p.m. Caltrans employees Arthur Grijalva, Tommy Neri, Pedro Vasquez, Pablo Diaz, and Leonardo Necochea were traveling on Interstate 8 in the Jacumba area of San Diego County when they came upon an accident. A van had overturned in the median and landed upright on its wheels starting a small brush fire. Mr. Neri and Mr. Necochea rushed to the vehicle and found an unconscious woman in the driver's seat. Mr. Diaz and Mr. Vasquez quickly began attempts to extinguish the fire. In an effort to prevent additional traffic collisions, Mr. Grijalva began directing traffic. While Mr. Neri and Mr. Necochea were administering first aid, they noticed the fire was getting out of control and approaching the vehicle. With the help of Mr. Diaz and Mr. Vasquez, they rigged a backboard from a portion of the wrecked vehicle, cut the woman's seatbelt, placed her on the backboard, and safely removed her from the vehicle to a secure location. Within minutes after removing the woman, the vehicle went up in flames. Mr. Neri and Mr. Necochea stayed with the woman and provided additional first aid while the others began assisting Mr. Grijalva with traffic control until help arrived. The actions of the Caltrans employees, without regard for their own safety, saved the woman's life. The State of California takes great pride in presenting Arthur Grijalva this Silver Medal of Valor, and Tommy Neri, Pablo Diaz, Leonardo Necochea, and Pedro Vasquez these Gold Medals of Valor, for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the call of duty.

Randy Nethery

Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

12/4/2002

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 4, 2002, Sergeant Randy Nethery was off duty when he observed a vehicle being operated in an erratic manner. As he followed the vehicle, it was apparent the driver was under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Lacking a cellular telephone, Sergeant Nethery followed the vehicle until the driver stopped in the parking lot of the US Bank in Weed Sergeant Nethery stopped his vehicle near the suspect and observed the apparently inebriated driver retrieve a large handgun and conceal it into his waistband and walk toward the bank entrance. Sergeant Nethery realizing the suspect was going to commit an armed robbery armed himself with his off-duty weapon and followed the suspect into the bank. Sergeant Nethery saw an opportunity to rush the suspect and apprehend him He ran toward the suspect without being noticed and wrestled him to the ground and applied a control hold, immobilizing the suspect until the Weed Police officers and other California Highway Patrol officers arrived from Mount Shasta

Stephan Neumann

Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

3/2/2002

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 2, 2002, Sergeant Stephan Neumann, who was off duty at the time, came upon a vehicle accident. One of the vehicles involved had struck a tree, and then a fire had ignited in the engine compartment. The occupant was unconscious and trapped behind the steering wheel of his vehicle. Sergeant Neumann entered the rear of the burning vehicle and attempted to extract the driver. Sergeant Neumann continued in his efforts until driven from the vehicle by the fire, which had spread to the passenger compartment and threatened to engulf the entire vehicle. In his efforts, Sergeant Neumann received second degree burns. Although the driver was not able to be saved, Sergeant Neumann exhibited great personal courage in his efforts to save the life of another

Mike Newell

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

1/1/1950

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 1, 1997 the CDF crew of Engine 3381, Fire Captain Mike Newel, Firefighter I Andy McDaniel and Firefighter I Lynne Lenell performed extraordinary acts of heroism at great risk to their persona safety and lives. Captain Newell, Firefighter I McDanie and Firefighter I Lenell responded to the Lake Wohlford Fire to assist with the rescue of the Melvin fami y At approximately 2 00 p m on August 1, 1997, Chief C ayton, Incident Commander (I.C.) for this fire, assigned Engine 3381 and its crew along with Chief Story to respond to the arson fire at Lake Wohlford The fire spread rapid y through heavy brush and up steep canyons, threatening numerous civilians and their property The fire destroyed 11 dwe ings, 20 30 other structures and approximately 30 vehicles. After a quick perusal of the area, it was discovered by I.C. Clayton that several property owners needed to be evacuated immediately I C Clayton was notified by a civi ian, Cindy Poe, that the Me vin fami y was sti trapped in the fire area. By this time the fire had deve oped into a fire storm with flames in excess of 50 feet high. Civilian Cindy Poe, who knew the location of the Melvin family was placed in Chief Story's vehic e I C C ayton, Chief Story, Cindy Poe, Captain C.ay Howe (BLM), Engine 3381 and crew headed into the fire storm. Burning and arching power lines were fa ing as they drove through the fire. Flame and smoke conditions obscured the road bringing visibility to zero, which presented and immediate life-threatening situation Direct air drops were ordered on the three vehicles, but had little effect due to poor visibility and turbulent wind conditions. The rescue team reached the Me vin fami y just before the fire reached their location. Engine 3381 and crew was .eft to protect the structure while the Melvin Family was placed in I.C. Clayton's vehic e and driven back through a second wall of fire to safety Despite perilous conditions and possibility of being swept into the fire storm, the actions of Fire Captain Mike Newe , Firefighter I Andy McDaniel and Firefighter I Lynne Lenell stand as testimony to the quality and courage of the everyday CDF firefighter.

Martin Newman

Fire Apparatus Engineer

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

8/18/2021

Special Act Award (Gold)

Around noon on August 18, 2021, the Cache Fire ignited on the east side of Clearlake, in the Dam Road area. The area faced a difficult fire season that year, and weather for the day showed Red Flag conditions with high temperatures, low humidity, and winds between 10-20 miles per hour. By 1:00 p.m., while Department of Forestry and Fire Protection fire fighters were working to evacuate one of two trailer parks, the fire made a rapid push south into the trailer park trapping fire fighters and residents. Looking for a way out, the access road was blocked. Firefighters worked with a tractor operator to break through a fence to allow trapped individuals a way to escape. Once the fire crew established a way out, a woman was spotted engulfed in flames, coming from the area of the trailer park where other individuals had just fled. CalFIRE Fire Apparatus Engineer Martin Newman, with Firefighters Cory Sousa and Jared Gotro, ran back into the fire. With the help of Firefighters Sousa and Gotro, FAE Newman hoisted the victim onto his shoulder and ran 100 feet to safety. The victim would eventually receive treatment at the UC Davis Burn Center. With no regard for his own safety, Mr. Newman went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Apparatus Engineer Martin Newman.

Len Nielson

Forester I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/25/2010

Special Service Award (Silver)

On July 25th, 2010, CAL FIRE employee Rhett Imperiale was on fire prevention patrol on Highway 96 near the town of Willow Creek, when he noticed fresh skid marks on the turnout. Not seeing a vehicle, he contacted other patrol units for information on past accidents in the area. With no known past accidents, Rhett was concerned there might be a car out of sight over the edge. US Forest Service Officer Bob Phillips responded and the two descended the treacherous slope. They located a vehicle with two seriously injured victims approximately 200 feet below the roadway. The vehicle was upside down on the steep slope, leaking fuel and had one victim still trapped inside. Together they removed the victim from the vehicle, moved both victims to a safe place away from the fuel, and administered first aid until additional help arrived. CAL FIRE employees Kurt McCray, Len Nielson, and Mark Rodgers arrived on scene and scaled down the steep rocky slope to provide assistance. With the help of personnel from other law enforcement and fire agencies, it took approximately two hours to secure the victims, move them up to the highway, and transport them to medical care. The rescue was extremely hazardous due to the steepness of the slope, falling rocks, leaking fuel, and high air temperatures. Rescue personnel had to deflect numerous rocks with their hands and arms to protect the victims and other rescue personnel. The rescue team's actions, without regard for their own safety, saved these two accident victims. The State of California takes great pride in presenting Mark Rodgers, Rhett Imperiale, Kurt McCray, and Len Nielson, these Silver Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call or duty or service.

Phillip Scott Nixon

Psychiatric Technician

Department of Mental Health

1/22/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

In the late afternoon of January 22, 2007 Department of Mental Health, Napa State Hospital, Psychiatric Technician Phillip Scott Nixon, was leaving a Target store in South Napa with his 13-year-old son, when he noticed a man wandering around the parking lot, looking into cars. As Mr. Nixon drove by, he saw the man pointing a gun at a woman who was standing by her car with her two small children inside. Mr. Nixon saw fear in the woman's eye and immediately knew the woman and her children were in danger. The suspect walked away when he saw Mr. Nixon. Fearing that this individual was going to put another person's life in jeopardy, Mr. Nixon jumped into his truck and followed him while he called 9-1-1 on his cell phone. Mr. Nixon reported what he witnessed to police dispatch. At about this time, a California Highway Patrol officer drove by, and Mr. Nixon flagged him down. The suspect took notice of Mr. Nixon and the CHP officer and bolted across the parking lot toward the highway. Mr. Nixon instructed his son to stay with the victims until police came. He then ran after the suspect, crossing several lanes of traffic, with the CHP officer also in pursuit. Mr. Nixon was able to corner the suspect at a dead end that was covered with blackberry bushes until the CHP Officer arrived and apprehended the suspect. Mr. Nixon's heroic and unselfish act of bravery prevented an armed man from possibly harming a woman and her two children, and greatly assisted law enforcement in apprehending the individual.

Thomas A. Noble

California Highway Patrolman

California Highway Patrol

5/21/1974

Special Act Award (Gold)

Officer Noble received a call about a subject on the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. The officer found the subject's vehicle approximately 150 yards west of the Yerba Buena Island Tunnel and two citizens on the bridge were waving their arms and pointing over the bridge. The Officer looked over the side and saw the subject standing on the bridge approximately eight feet below the roadway surface. Officer Noble climbed over the side and came within approximately 12 feet of the subject. The subject was very apprehensive at Officer Noble's presence. Officer Noble removed his gunbelt and sunglasses and began to talk to the subject. The subject was very depressed due to family problems. Officer Noble conversed with him for approximately 45 minutes when the subject stretched out on the bridge with his hands on an upper beam and his feet still on the lower beam, closed his eyes and began to cry. A bridge employee moved to a point where the subject could not see him and when the subject's eyes were closed, Officer Noble moved across the structure and put a bear hug around the subject with the bridge employee's help. They wrapped a rope around the subject's ankles, hauled him to the roadway and then took him to the hospital.

Michael Aloysius Nolan

Captain

California Army National Guard

7/31/1962

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 31, 1962, while traveling on U.S. 40, Captain Michael A. Nolan of the California Army National Guard witnessed an accident just north of Vallejo. a pickup truck pulling a trailer coach went out of control, collided head on with a passenger car and then came to rest on top of the other vehicle. Both immediately caught fire. Two people in the pickup were killed instantly when they were ejected from their vehicle. With complete disregard to his own personal safety, Captain Nolan attempted to rescue the five people, including three children, that were imprisoned in the blazing wreckage. When he found the door of the passenger car jammed, Captain Nolan lifted the burning truck off of the passenger car to release the weight and then broke the car window with his bare fist to open it. Despite the intense heat and imminent danger of an exploding gas tank, Captain Nolan, with the assistance of others who had arrived at the scene, bravely carried the wounded victims to safety. Although Captain Nolan spent a week in the hospital afterwards with an injured back, burns and cuts, he stayed and continued to render aid until an ambulance arrived.

Richard N. Noonan

Captain

California Highway Patrol

7/24/1982

Special Act Award (Gold)

Just after 1 p m , Captain Richard Noonan was off duty and traveling to a local store when he spotted a residential fire and stopped to investigate. He learned from those at the scene that a man was in the house and two people had already made unsuccessful attempts to enter the residence. With no regard to his own personal safety, Captain Noonan went into the burning house. Despite heavy smoke that cut visibility to nearly zero, he located the severely burned victim and with the help of arriving firefighters, pulled the man out. Unfortunately, the victim succumbed to his injuries later.

Dane Norem

Highway Patrol Officer

Department of Justice

5/9/2013

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On October 25, 2012, at 10:00 p.m. Officer Dane Norem of the California Highway Patrol was dispatched to investigate a possible suicidal male climbing the overpass fence over State Route 91. He arrived to find the pedestrian scaling the fence apparently determined to hurtle himself from the overpass onto the freeway 40 feet below. Convinced that should the pedestrian jumped, not only he would die but unsuspecting freeway drivers and passengers would be put in severe jeopardy as well, Officer Norm charged the pedestrian and grabbed his leg as the pedestrian straddled the top of the overpass fence. Unfortunately, Officer Norem was unaware he was confronting a transient under the influence of illicit drugs who had been experiencing paranoid thoughts against law enforcement personnel. Desperate to free himself, the pedestrian, now a suspect, drew a utility knife from his jacket and began repeatedly stabbing Officer Norem in the face, arm, and upper shoulder. Concerned for the safety of others, Officer Norem continued to hold onto the man's leg despite his injuries, and being stabbed, until additional units arrived. A second CHP Officer arrived and struck the suspect with a nonasd-lethal fired from a shotgun, toppling the suspect off the fence and back onto the overpass where he was taken into custody. Officer Norem was transported to a hospital and underwent surgery for his stab wounds and severe eye injury. He is expected to make a full recovery. The suspect was booked on several charges, including attempted murder of a peace officer.

Dane Norem

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/25/2012

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 25, 2012, at approximately 9:51 p.m., California Highway Patrol Officer Dane Norem responded to a call of a pedestrian crying, possibly suicidal, and climbing the overpass fence of State Route 91 in Riverside. The pedestrian, unknown to the officer, was under the influence of drugs and having paranoid thoughts. He also had a utility knife. When Officer Norem arrived he noticed the man sitting on the sidewalk against the overpass bridge railing. When the man saw Officer Norem approaching him, he began to scale the fence, so Officer Norem exited his patrol car and ran towards the man. Officer Norem grabbed the man's right leg as he straddled the top of the fence, preventing him from falling onto the freeway below. In an attempt to free himself, the man pulled the utility knife out of his jacket and began stabbing the officer multiple times in the face, arm, and upper shoulder. Two off duty law enforcement officers stopped and ordered him to drop his knife, but he just waved it at them. They attempted to stop him, but the physical struggle continued. Officer Norem held on to the man's right leg for over two minutes even though he was stabbed multiple times, including a severe puncture wound to his right eye. When a second CHP officer arrived on the scene, the officer used a less than lethal shotgun. The man fell off the top of the fence and was immediately taken into custody. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to Officer Dane Norem

John E. Nores

Lieutenant

Department of Fish and Wildlife

8/5/2005

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 5, 2005, at approximately 7:15 a.m. California Department of Fish and Game Warden Adam Kavanagh, Patrol Lieutenant John Nores and Warden Kyle Kroll collaborated with a team of law enforcement officers from the Santa Clara Sheriff's Office Special Operations Unit on an early morning marijuana eradication detail in the mountains west of Los Gatos. The team hiked several miles to reach the marijuana plantation. As they moved into the area, at least two growers ambushed the team, shooting Warden Kroll through both legs. As Warden Kroll fell to the ground, Lt. Nores returned fire and positioned himself between Warden Kroll and the growers in an attempt to protect Warden Kroll from being shot again. Sheriff's deputies also returned fire and later discovered they had shot and killed one of the growers. After the initial firefight, the team was unable to locate the growers due to dense brush. They immediately set up a defensive perimeter, and Lt. Nores assessed Warden Kroll's injuries and administered first aid. Warden Kroll's gunshot wounds were bleeding profusely, so Lt. Nores applied direct pressure, covered, and tied-off both leg wounds. The team held their perimeter and radioed their situation to dispatch. A short time later, the rescue helicopter flew over to mark the teams' location but was directed not to land until the hillside was secured from the possible sniper fire from the still unknown location of the armed growers. For the next two and a half hours, the team waited and maintained a perimeter. Lt. Nores continued to apply first aid and monitor Warden Kroll's vital signs. When the helicopter returned, the team was told that a rescue basket could not be lowered due to the dense vegetation. Without hesitation, Warden Kavanagh volunteered to cut a landing pad. Knowing that he would have to break cover, making him a possible target for the armed growers, Warden Kavanagh cut an 8 x 8 landing pad with his machete as the rest of the team covered him. With the landing pad now established, the rescue helicopter lowered a medic and basket to safely retrieve Warden Kroll and delivered him to the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center. Due to Lt. Nores and Warden Kavanagh's professionalism, bravery, and self-sacrifice, Warden Kroll survived, recovered, and ultimately returned to full duty.

Sean P. Norman

Fire Apparatus Engineer Paramedic

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/2/1998

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Tom Oldag, Fire Apparatus Engineer Paramedics Sean Norman, James Mathias and Branson 'Skip' Ratsep on February 2, 1998 and February 3, 1998, performed an act of heroism at risk to their personal safety when they took part in the rescue of numerous citizens stranded in their homes and cars surrounded by rising flood waters. On Monday, during a 17-hour period from 5 30 p m February 2, 1998 to 10:30 a.m. on February 3, 1998 at Pescadero CDF Station 59, Captain Tom Oldag, Fire Apparatus Engineer Paramedics Sean Norman, James Mathias, and Skip Ratsep, assisted by mutual aid from Half Moon Bay Fire District took part in the rescue of 16 citizens, ages 9 months to 86 years old, who were trapped in the top story of a two story apartment complex. In order to rescue the last five victims from the flooded apartment complex, it was necessary to bore through a wall in order to access the victims The victims had to be taken out with 200 feet of rescue line through a strong current while (the rescuers) being careful to avoid numerous floating objects including vehicles, furniture, parts of homes and debris and propane tanks during the rescue operations. In addition to rescuing stranded citizens from the apartment complex, Engine 59 and Engine 1775's crew rescued numerous citizens stranded in their vehicles due to rising water on Pescadero Road The waters had formed a lake on top of Pescadero Road that was 1/2 mile wide and two to five feet deep. Victims were being pulled up onto the CDF engine as their cars began to float away Along with these victims, Engine 59 and Engine 1775 rescued additional citizens in town who were trapped by the rising flood waters In all, Engine 59 and 1775 transported over 16 citizens through the floodwaters to the safety of the Pescadero Station. Without the heroic actions of these four gentlemen, lives would have been at risk and certainly lost.

Don L. Norris

Heavy Fire Equipment Operator

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

8/10/1990

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 10, 1990, Heavy Fire Equipment Operator, Don L. Norris, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his personal safety and life in his rescue of two private dozer operators who were trapped on top of a hill by an oncoming fire near Bear Mountain in Shasta County. On the above date at approximately 1335 hours, Operator Norris and two private dozer operators were clearing a fire line; enroute to an access road when a backfire fanned by increasing winds unexpectedly jumped the fire line. Operator Norris and the two other men headed for the access road, but were cut off at the top of a hill as the backfire from the south and the main fire from the east rapidly approached them. As the other operators started to panic, Operator Norris knew he had to talk fast and to get them to listen. With the fires rapidly closing in on them, he instructed them to clear a 125' island on top of the hill, and in the center create a dirt barricade 7' high facing the fire coming from the south. Operator Norris placed his dozer in the center of the barricade and positioned the other two dozer on either side, instructing the operators to leave the dozers running at half throttle, to move the air under and around them. Then, without regard for his own safety and life, Operator Norris positioned the men under the dozers and handed each one the only standard wild and fire shelters he had and instructed them to stay in radio communications under the shelters until he told them to come out. With only a fire blanket for protection, Operator Norris crawled under his dozer pulling the fire blanket on top of himself and laying face down waiting for the fire to hit. They could hear the fire raging around them as the burning embers blew over and under the dozers. Forty-five minutes later, they emerged from their shelters to find that it was still too hot. Operator Norris directed them to move their shelters to the east side of their dozers where they remained until it was safe to go back to work. Without the decisive action of Operator Norris, the two private dozer operators may well have perished in the fire.

Thomas Arthur Northrup

Radio Dispatcher

California Highway Patrol

2/14/1979

Special Act Award (Gold)

Thomas A. Northrup was parked outside of a local Bakersfield restaurant when he observed three males approaching the establishment. Suspecting a robbery attempt, Mr. Northrup ran inside the building and attempted to lock the door. The three men forced their way in and pulled out several guns. There were three female employees inside. One gunman announced he would start shooting, starting with the women and ordered the safe opened. When one of the woman started to speak, the gunman fired a shot over their heads. Mr. Northrup knew the woman couldn't open the safe, but he felt that the gunman would kill them if someone didn't try. He attempted to open the safe. When he was unable to do so, one of the gunman placed a gun to his forehead. The gunman then lowered the gun and shot Mr. Northrup in the leg before fleeing the scene. The three women were unharmed.

James W. Nothhelfer

California State Park Peace Officer / Lifeguard

Department of Parks and Recreation

6/22/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 22, 2009, California State Park Peace Officers, Lifeguard James W Nothhelfer and Ranger Timothy B. Fellars, responded to a report of an overturned boat off the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve near Moss Beach This area is well known for causing boat accidents due to the hazardous, shallow reef At approximately 1:00 p.m. Officer Nothhelfer arrived on the scene, put his wetsuit on, and began to paddle out toward the victims. Facing nine foot choppy surf that was closely spaced due to the northwest winds that day and floating debris and gasoline caused from the overturned boat, Officer Nothhelfer made his way out through the rocky reef surf zone approximately 300 yards offshore. Six family members, including a six year old boy, had all been tossed into the 54 degree water when their boat overturned. Gathering five of the six family members together on top of his rescue paddleboard, Officer Nothhelfer was able to locate the sixth member who was clinging to the bow of the boat and brought him back to the paddleboard just before the boat sank Officer Nothhelfer was able to hold on to all of the family members until Ranger Fellars arrived on the scene to provide additional help. Ranger Fellars, a former Lifeguard with California State Parks, put his wetsuit on and swam out through the same dangerous area to assist Officer Nothhelfer Despite being hit repeatedly by the surf, together they were able to hold on to the family members until all were transferred to a waiting Patrol boat. After transport to the harbor, five of the family members were transported by ground ambulances to area hospitals and treated for hypothermia. The six year old boy was transported by medical helicopter to an area hospital for severe hypothermia and near drowning. Although tired from their efforts, Officer Nothhelfer and Ranger Fellars were not injured during this strenuous and dangerous ocean rescue.

Jeffrey Nousch

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/26/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 26, 2007, at approximately 2:30 p.m. employees of Scaled Composites, an aerospace development company at Mojave Air and Space Port, were working near two large tanks of nitrous oxide gas when one of the carbon fiber tanks exploded. CHP Sergeants Jeffrey Baird and Mark McCormack along with Officers Jack Borne, Jesse Borne, Stephen Hunsaker Byron Jobe, Jeffrey Nousch and Roberta Record responded to the scene. The toxic gas fumes and carbon fiber particles from the explosion posed a respiratory hazard. The second tank, which contained 10,000 pounds of nitrous oxide gas, was also damaged and in danger of exploding. Because of the significant hazard and seriousness of the victims' injuries, the first responders could not wait for a hazardous material team, so CHP personnel entered and rendered aid to the victims. They helped place two victims onto backboards, and carried them to a waiting life flight helicopter; two other victims were placed in ambulances and triaged at a safe zone. CHP personnel remained on site evacuating the remaining Mojave Air and Space Port employees to a safe area. Due to the heroic efforts of these men and women, three of the four victims were successfully rescued and lived.

Henry L. Null

Fish and Game Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

12/23/1964

Special Act Award (Gold)

At the height of the December floods of 1964 in Northern California, Henry L. Null twice entered the raging Eel River in a small boat that could have easily been demolished by heavy logs, houses and entire trees, to save four lives.

Tony S. Nunes

Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/22/1997

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 10 00 a m , Officers Tony S Nunes and Scott Worley were on patrol when they observed smoke in the roadway at 18 Street north of K Street. The officers located the source of the smoke as the rear wall of a building on 18th street. Officers Nunes and Worley approached the building and saw flames coming from the rear of the residence. The officer requested Sacramento City Fire and began awakening the residents. All but two residents emerged from the building so Officer Nunes and Worley approached the southern upper apartment and banged on the door. The apartment was filled with smoke and after banging loudly on the door, the officers were about to kick it in when the resident answered.

He had been sleeping soundly The officers entered the apartment and confirmed the residency was not further occupied. The officer spoke with the people on the sidewalk and were told that one resident was still unaccounted for and they were not sure if she was home or not. Officer Nunes and Worley again went up to the second floor of the burning building and repeatedly banged on the missing resident's apartment door, but there was no answer With smoke increasing and no confirmed ETA from the fire department, Officer Worley kicked in the two, the two officers entered and confirmed the apartment was unoccupied. The officers gathered all the residents in from of the building and everyone was accounted for

Willard O'Diear

Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/3/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Willard O'Diear, on May 3, 2004, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his personal safety when he left a position of cover to shoot at a suspect that had a deputy sheriff pinned down with a semi-automatic rifle. At approximately 10:30 p.m. two Crescent City, California police officers attempted to make an enforcement stop on a subject in connection with a domestic violence incident. The subject, identified as Mr. Loya, failed to yield and a lengthy pursuit ensured. The pursuit entered United States Route 101, traveling southbound and the CHP were asked to assume the pursuit. During the course of the pursuit, the suspect fired multiple rounds and at one point, rounds struck a CHP sergeant's patrol vehicle. The sergeant received facial cuts from the flying glass. Allied agencies in the area had been alerted to the pursuit and the fact that shots were being fired at law enforcement. The Humboldt County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) and the York Tribal Police were notified. Due to the subject's aggressive tactics, the remote mountainous roadway, and the late hour, the decision was made not to pursue the suspect. At 1:33 a.m., the suspect passed officers, began firing at officers again and continued to use similar tactics of stopping and waiting to ambush law enforcement officers. The suspect once again was successful in evading law enforcement. Additional CHP resources were then called out to assist and responded at 2:30 a.m. At 6:53 a.m. CHP, HCSO and Hoopa Tribal Police were standing by on State Route 169. The suspect approached the officers in his vehicle from an adjacent dirt road and immediately began firing at the officers with a high powered, semi-automatic rifle. Officers took covering positions, however, one HCSO deputy was pinned in his patrol vehicle by heavy rifle fire from the suspect. The deputy had no avenue of escape. CHP Officer O'Diear observed the deputy taking multiple rounds. Officer O'Diear strongly felt that the deputy would be killed if the suspect continued to fire at the deputy. Officer O'Diear swiftly and courageously, with little regard for his own personnel safety, made the conscious decision to leave cover and fire at the suspect. Officer O'Diear fired two rounds. The suspect immediately ceased firing and fled the area. The suspect was able to elude capture and eventually escaped to Mexico. Officer O'Diear by his selfless act clearly prevented a tragedy from occurring. Deputy Fred Filyau, the deputy trapped by gunfire, strongly feels that Officer O'Diear saved his life. Had it not been for Officer O'Diear's courageous, selfless actions, Deputy Fred Filyau would have been seriously injured, if not killed.

Kevin O'Leary

Batallion Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

10/26/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 26, 2003, at approximately 2:45 a.m. Battalion Chief O'Leary directed resources to evacuate residents in the Yellow Brick and Cool Valley area, around Fire Station 73, North Lake Wohford and Paradise Mountain Road. All available fire apparatus were involved in protecting the area surrounding Fire Station 73 and initiating rescues. California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Battalion Chief Kevin O'Leary, performed an act of heroism extending far beyond the normal call of duty at risk to his own personal safety during the Paradise Fire when he entered a home that was well involved in flames to rescue an elderly occupant of the home. A search was made of the entire dwelling. As fire conditions inside the dwelling deteriorated, he found all exits involved with fire, and was only able to exit a bedroom window just seconds before the whole dwelling became engulfed. As he ran around the back of the home, he found the elderly female occupant attempting to free her many pinned up dogs. He convinced her to leave only after all the dogs were released and affected her escape. He then drove her and two other men to the Valley View Casino parking lot for temporary safety, and notifying people still in their vehicles on the access road to return to the casino too. Battalion Chief O'Leary was able to convince hundreds of panicked people who were attempting to flee the fire on top of Paradise Mountain Road to turn around and re-locate at the Sky Line Mobile Home Park. Both roadways off this development were compromised and would only result in many burn victims. Battalion Chief O'Leary's quick rescue actions and command of a multitude of residents in the area under extremely dangerous fire conditions contributed to the rescue of the elderly woman and her dogs still inside her home, and the subsequent relocation of additional potential victims to safety

Scott Oconnor

El Segundo Police Department, Officer

Other

4/11/2008

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On April 11, 2008, Lieutenant Garcia and Officer O'Connor were working a special detail at a theatre complex when they were told by the manager of an uncooperative man in the lobby who was demanding a ticket refund. The officers approached and noticed the man appeared extremely sweaty. The subject pulled away at an attempted pat down and then retrieved a weapon when the officers reached for him. The subject opened fire, his first shot striking Lieutenant Garcia in the face. The round entered above Lieutenant Garcia's lip, shattering the right side of his upper jaw, knocking out several teeth. The bullet continued on, striking a vertebrae and finally lodging in Lieutenant Garcia's neck. Officer O'Connor tackled the subject, but he continued firing, striking Officer O'Connor in the chest and shoulder at point blank range. Fortunately Officer O'Connor's bullet proof vest absorbed the impact from the torso shot, but the shoulder shot caused extensive damage, severing several tendons and muscles. The subject then got up and ran from the building. As he did so, Officer O'Connor followed, engaging the subject in a running gun battle. Lieutenant Garcia, dazed and bleeding profusely fought off his injuries and followed, also firing his service weapon. Both officers fired until the subject was incapacitated.

Tom Oldag

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/2/1998

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Tom Oldag, Fire Apparatus Engineer Paramedics Sean Norman, James Mathias and Branson 'Skip' Ratsep on February 2, 1998 and February 3, 1998, performed an act of heroism at risk to their personal safety when they took part in the rescue of numerous citizens stranded in their homes and cars surrounded by rising flood waters. On Monday, during a 17-hour period from 5 30 p m February 2, 1998 to 10:30 a.m. on February 3, 1998 at Pescadero CDF Station 59 Captain Tom Oldag, Fire Apparatus Engineer Paramedics Sean Norman, James Mathias, and Skip Ratsep, assisted by mutual aid from Half Moon Bay Fire District took part in the rescue of 16 citizens, ages 9 months to 86 years old, who were trapped in the top story of a two story apartment complex. In order to rescue the last five victims from the flooded apartment complex, it was necessary to bore through a wall in order to access the victims The victims had to be taken out with 200 feet of rescue line through a strong current while (the rescuers) being careful to avoid numerous floating objects including vehicles, furniture, parts of homes and debris and propane tanks during the rescue operations. In addition to rescuing stranded citizens from the apartment complex, Engine 59 and Engine 1775's crew rescued numerous citizens stranded in their vehicles due to rising water on Pescadero Road The waters had formed a lake on top of Pescadero Road that was 1/2 mile wide and two to five feet deep. Victims were being pulled up onto the CDF engine as their cars began to float away Along with these victims, Engine 59 and Engine 1775 rescued additional citizens in town who were trapped by the rising flood waters In all, Engine 59 and 1775 transported over 16 citizens through the floodwaters to the safety of the Pescadero Station. Without the heroic actions of these four gentlemen, lives would have been at risk and certainly lost.

Flint Oliver

Firefighter I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

1/10/1995

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 10, 1995, CDF Firefighter I Flint F. Oliver and Fire Captain Michael A Carr performed extraordinary acts of heroism at great personal risk to their own safety and lives. During a 100-year-flood, they rescued three victims (one disabled and one nonswimmer) trapped in a van submerged in a raging current of water runoff. At approximately 4:09 pm, Captain Carr, along with Firefighter Oliver and several volunteer firefighters, arrived at the scene. Along with the three victims, the water contained an animal carcass, a propane tank, septic effluence, garbage, and other floating debris. Everyone was amazed the van stopped where it did instead of moving on to the North Fork of Honcut Creek. Captain Carr was trained in water rescue and knew rescues of the sort were only attempted with specialized equipment and specially trained personnel. He also knew this could very easily turn into a body recovery if they waited any longer for help. He assumed command and improvised the rescue with a canoe borrowed from a bystander. While Captain Carr wore a wet suit, water-rescue helmet, and personal flotation devise, Firefighter Oliver had only his work uniform, tennis shoes, and a personal flotation devise. When the men waded out to the van, it was two hours since the victims were stranded. The shore crew loaded up a portable stretcher, webbing, life line, and other water rescue equipment into the canoe. Oliver waded back for the canoe and then took it out to the van where they attempted to secure it. Captain Carr called Gary Sanders and Dawn Osbourne out to steady the canoe sot they could load the victims. Carr and Oliver assisted the victims, one at a time, into the canoe, and floated them to safety. Getting one victim out was particularly difficult as she was in second stage hypothermia, lethargic, nonresponsive, on the verge of unconsciousness, and completely unable to help.

Robert L. Oltman

Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/24/1960

Special Act Award (Gold)

On February 24, 1960, while en route to Quincy from Susanville, Officer Robert L. Oltman received a radio communication dispatching him to the east shore of Lake Almanor where it was reported victims of an overturned boat were in danger of drowning. On arriving at the Lake Officer Oltman observed three men clinging to a capsized boat approximately 300 yards offshore. Officer Oltman located an eight foot flat bottomed skiff and launched it. The skiff was not equipped with oar locks and the hull leaked. Disregarding this, Officer Oltman knelt in the bottom of the boat and using a single oar, proceeded to the stranded victims. As he approached the capsized boat, one victim slipped under the surface of the water and disappeared. On reaching the boat, Officer Oltman found it necessary to force them to release their holds on the capsized boat and cling to the side of the rescuing skiff, which was filling with water. After securing the two victims to the skiff, Officer Oltman proceeded to paddle towards shore when an airplane dispatched by the Rogers Air Service of Chester circled and dropped two life jackets in the vicinity of the endangered persons. Officer Oltman maneuvered his skiff to the jackets and with considerable difficulty and danger to himself, forced the unwilling victims into the life jackets. During this time, several attempts were made by the victims to climb into the skiff, which obviously would have capsized. During the process of rescue it was necessary for this officer to alternately encourage and antagonize the victims to prevent their giving up and releasing their hold on the skiff. Due to the difficultly experienced by the officer in controlling the victims, and also due to the condition of the skiff, the rescuing officer, exhausted in his attempt to paddle the rescuing craft to shore, called for assistance from Traffic officer Denman Bryam who arrived at the scene. Officer Bryam, with the assistance of other officer, secured a larger skiff at which time Officer Bryam and an unidentified helper paddled to the victims and loaded them into the larger boat. On reaching the shore Officer Oltman and the victims were carried to an awaiting ambulance and transported to the Feather River District Hospital for treatment. At the time of this incident Officer Oltman and the victims were exposed extremely cold water ranging in temperature to approximately 35 degrees.

Joseph Ornelas

Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/5/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Joseph Ornelas, on February 5, 2001, performed an act of heroism at risk to his personal safety as he caught a woman in mid-air as she jumped off a freeway overpass. At approximately 10 a.m., on February 5, 2001 Officer Joseph Ornelas along with Officer T. Gowin, and Officer J. O'Neil responded to a report of a possible jumper from a freeway overpass. He located Ms. Yauger as she sat on top of the south bridge railing, eastbound Interstate 205 over Tracy Blvd. She removed her shoes and placed them on the road next to the bridge rail. The Ms. Yauger would not respond to conversation or acknowledge the officers presence. She suddenly turned around, slipped her shoes back on, and began walking towards the north side of the freeway overpass. The three officers began moving towards the north rail in an attempt to cut her off. Ms. Yauger reversed her direction and began running towards the south rail again. Officer Ornelas was closest to her and he tried cutting her off from the south rail. Ms. Yauger reached her at the south rail before Officer Ornelas and climbed over to the outside of the rail and let go, beginning her fall to the ground below. Officer Ornelas was able to reach the south rail at about the same time Ms. Yauger released herself. Officer Ornelas, without taking time to asses the danger to himself, reached over the edge of the overpass and was successful in grabbing Ms. Yauger as she fell, putting himself in a precarious position. He was holding onto Ms. Yauger, and because of the low height of the bridge rail, had nothing to hold onto or brace himself with as he kept both of them from falling to the ground below. Officer Ornelas held onto the now wildly flailing woman until the other two officers reached him a few seconds later. Between the three officers, they were successful in lifting the resisting Ms. Yauger back into the safety of the freeway

Gilbert L. Osuna

Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/17/1998

Special Service Award (Silver)

California Highway Patrol Officer Kevin G. Monday and Officer Gilbert L. Osuna, on October 17, 1998, performed an act of heroism at risk to their personal safety when they observed a three-story apartment building on fire and immediately initiated evacuation procedures. Officers Monday and Osuna, without personal protective equipment, were able to rescue seven elderly residents from second and third-floor apartments filled with dense smoke and flames. At approximately 8:15 p.m. Officers Monday and Osuna were on patrol in the City of San Bernardino when they observed a three-story apartment building on fire. Elderly and disabled individuals resided in the building. Officers Monday and Osuna were the first on the scene and immediately initiated evacuation procedures. Officers Monday and Osuna entered the burning building numerous times to evacuate the sleeping residents. These acts placed the officers' lives in danger as they were without personal protective equipment. Fire and rescue personnel arriving on the scene were unable to access the second and third floors due to dense smoke and flames inside the building. Officers Monday and Osuna assisted fire personnel by climbing ladders and rescuing the trapped residents crowded onto the balconies. Officers Monday and Osuna also provided oxygen and first aid to the injured residents. Once the evacuation of all the residents was completed, Officers Monday and Osuna continued to provide service to the displaced residents by assisting them onto a waiting bus which provided transportation to a nearby shelter. Only after all of the residents had been evacuated did the officers seek aid from their own injuries and smoke inhalation. Officers Monday and Osuna risked their lives to save the lives of the residents. It is clear Officers Monday and Osuna unselfishly placed their own safety aside in repeated valiant efforts to rescue the elderly residents of the apartment building. These actions demonstrate their commitment to providing protection and service to the citizens of this state and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the California Highway Patrol.

Ignacio "Chopper" G. Otero, Jr.

Fire Fighter II

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

5/9/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 9, 2007, at 10:30 p.m., units from the Riverside County Fire Department, Indio Fire Service, responded to a fire at a strip mall in the City of Indio. The company officer ordered the crew to enter the rear of the strip mall to evaluate fire conditions. The firefighters discovered that the fire had extended to all of the stores and observed that the concealed space overhead had heavy black smoke running the length of the strip mall. As a result, the commander ordered a withdrawal. CAL FIRE Firefighter Ignacio "Chopper" Otero, Jr. and Firefighter Mark Grasso immediately positioned themselves to aggressively attack the main fire and provide protection to the firefighters who were withdrawing from the interior and roof areas. Soon thereafter, the facade and portions of the concealed space overhead cracked and broke away from the section of the building engulfed in fire. The portion of the building that failed gave no notice of structural failure and was approximately 60 feet in length and 5 feet in height. Firefighter Otero, without hesitation, yelled to his Captain and partner, and without concern for his own well being, grabbed Firefighter Grasso and moved him to safety. As the facade of the building was falling, Firefighter Otero placed himself between Firefighter Grasso and the portion of the building that was falling. It struck Firefighter Otero, causing him injuries that required treatment at a hospital, but he saved Firefighter Grasso's life.

Jose R. Palacio, Jr.

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/24/1992

Special Act Award (Gold)

State Traffic Officers Jeffrey M Morris and Jose R Palacio, Jr , on September 24, 1992, performed acts of heroism at great risk to their personal safety to rescue thirty-one tenants from burning buildings. On the date noted above, at approximately 1:12 a m. Officers Morris and Palacio observed a large column of smoke in the vicinity of Belmont Avenue and Broadway, Fresno The Officers observed a carport area located between two multistory buildings engulfed in flames. Only moments after arriving one of the vehicles in the carport exploded. The fire then began to rapidly spread to the rest of the carport and to adjacent buildings. Officer Morris entered the first building and ran up to the third floor where most of the smoke was located He began shouting and beating on doors to arouse and advise the tenants of the fire. Officer Morris went to each apartment, rapidly checking to see if it was open or occupied. Although the hall was filling with smoke, he continued in this manner until the floor was cleared and began escorting people to safety, Officer Morris then went to the second and first floor and repeated his efforts Meanwhile Officer Palacio notified CHP dispatch and then ran to the front of the building. One person said there was another building in which the tenants might not be able to get out. Officer Palacio ran to the specified building and entered it. Although he could hardly breathe or see, Officer Palacio started banging on doors and yelling that there was a fire. As the people were leaving, he checked behind them until he was forced out by the smoke and flames. When he was outside, the manager said that everyone had been evacuated but another building needed to be evacuated Officer Palacio then ran to that building an notified the tenants to evacuate. Once that was accomplished, he ran back to the other building Officer Morris was in and assisted him in checking the first floor. Together they prevented tenants from going back in the buildings and waited for the fire department to arrive. Due to the Officers' quick actions, they were able to prevent any fatalities or injuries from the fire which became a full second alarm incident

Michael Panlilio

Officer

California Highway Patrol

6/19/2019

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 19, 2019, at approximately 6:00 p.m., California Highway Patrol Officer Michael Panlilio responded to a request for assistance from the Sacramento Police Department. The Sacramento Police Department advised that Officer Tara O'Sullivan had been shot and was lying in the backyard of a residence. Attempts to rescue her were met with gunfire by the barricaded suspect. Without hesitation, Officer Panlilio responded to the scene and began to work with other officers to actively assess the situation. The gravity of the situation became apparent as officers realized the suspect was utilizing a high-powered rifle capable of penetrating any department-issued ballistic vest material. The suspect was shooting from an elevated position while obscured behind the walls of his home and was using security cameras to monitor the exact positions of on-scene law enforcement personnel. Any attempt to rescue Officer O'Sullivan would expose officers to a life-threatening risk of being shot by the barricaded suspect. Despite the obvious and extreme danger, Officer Panlilio made the decision to leave his position of safety and joined the effort to rescue Officer O'Sullivan, taking cover behind an armored vehicle. The armored vehicle came under fire as it breached the backyard fence and made its way to a location between the gunman and Officer O'Sullivan. Officer O'Sullivan was loaded into the armored vehicle, but as the armored vehicle was retreating from the backyard, it became disabled while still in the line-of-fire of the barricaded gunman. Officer Panlilio not only understood the immediate need to get Officer O'Sullivan to the hospital, he was also aware of the vulnerable situation they now faced due to the disabled vehicle. Officer Panlilio lifted Officer O'Sullivan with the assistance of Sacramento County Sheriff's Deputy Richard Nielsen and carried her across 30 feet of open ground to an awaiting Sacramento Police Department patrol vehicle. During the rescue carry to the patrol vehicle, the gunman was firing rifle rounds at Officer Panlilio and Deputy Nielsen. Once inside the patrol vehicle, Officer Panlilio took control of the situation and directed the driver to drive to the UC Davis Medical Center. During the transport, Officer Panlilio used his advanced medical training as he guided Deputy Nielsen to help him perform two-man cardiopulmonary resuscitation. He continuously provided verbal encouragement to Deputy Nielsen and the driver. Officer Panlilio's actions during this rescue effort were truly that of a selfless individual. His ability to maintain focus while voluntarily placing himself in the crosshairs of danger demonstrates a true act of valor. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Panlilio went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Michael Panlilio

Barry Parker

San Francisco Police Department Officer

Other

4/10/2004

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

"On April 10, 2004, Officer Barry Parker of the San Francisco Police Department and his partner were assigned to a plainclothes detail in a gang ridden neighborhood in San Francisco. The officers were looking for violent street gang members. At approximately 9:30 p.m., the two officers encountered a suspicious person who they suspected was armed. After approaching this individual, who was later identified as a member of a street gang, the two officers were fired upon. During the incident, Officer Parker attempted to save his partner, who ultimately died from his wounds, by using his body as a human shield."

William T. Parker

State Park Attendant

Department of Parks and Recreation

8/12/1966

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 12, 1966, in the afternoon, State Park Attendant William T. Parker was summoned to Wright's Beach on the Sonoma Coast after two young girls had been caught in the backwash of a large wave and swept out more than 100 feet from shore. Men on the shore formed a human chain and pulled one of the girls to shore. When Mr. Parker arrived he found their mother floundering offshore she had unsuccessfully gone to the aid of her children. Appraising the situation, Mr. Parker took a life ring and swam to the young girl, who was face down in the water. After reaching her he put the life ring over her head and towed her back to shore through the heavy surf. Although he swallowed water and was near exhaustion, Mr. Parker returned to the water and pulled the mother to shore, aided by a man with an inflated tire tube and rope. After checking the condition of the girl and seeing her mother receive artificial respiration, Mr. Parker called the Sheriff's Office for assistance. The girl was saved, but unfortunately her mother could not be revived.

Jason A. Patterson

Firefighter I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

10/31/2012

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 31, 2012, at approximately 6:45 a.m., off duty Firefighter I Jason A. Patterson was at home when he smelled smoke and discovered fire was coming from the apartment below. He told his girlfriend to call 911, then ran downstairs to wake his neighbors. After pounding on the door and getting no response, he opened the unlocked front door, and fearing his neighbors were still inside, entered the smoke filled apartment. He was crawling along the floor, feeling his way, when he heard the sound of coughing coming from a bedroom. He made his way to the bedroom and found a three year old boy in the doorway, coughing violently. He carried the little boy out of the building, grabbed a fire extinguisher and went back in. The small fire extinguisher, however, was no match for the fire and once it was emptied he was forced to retreat. Despite Firefighter Patterson's valiant efforts and the subsequent quick arrival of local fire engines, a woman was found deceased inside the apartment. The three year old boy was in fair condition and expected to recover.

Bryan Paul

Los Gatos Monte Sereno Police Officer

Other

10/17/2008

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On October 17, 2008, Officers Paul and Romeo received a call that a car had left a driveway and gone backwards down a steep embankment on an isolated hillside. The older couple in the car was uninjured, but the driver, now holding the brake, was unable to leave the car without it sliding further down the hill. Officers Paul and Romeo had to first scale a locked gate and then search for the car in the dark. Footing was treacherous when the officers located the vehicle, and when the victim attempted to exit the car, it started to slide further down the hill. There was no way to brace the car, so Officer Romeo held the driver's door while Officer Paul continued pressure on the brake with his hands, exposing his body to a rollover threat, but relieving the exhausted driver. Officer Paul and Romeo held these positions for over a half hour as fire personnel worked to set up rigging to stabilize the car. When the officers themselves began to tire, they devised a plan to extricate the driver in a sudden move pulling him free. As this plan was deployed, the driver was rescued, but Officer Romeo was dragged down the hill by the now released car as he continued to hold the door for the rescue. Fortunately no one was injured in the incident.

Robert Paul III

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/12/2019

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 12, 2019, at approximately 5:30 pm, California Highway Patrol Officer Robert Paul was assisting California Highway Patrol Officer Andre Moye, Jr. with an enforcement stop, when the suspect retrieved a rifle, and opened fire without warning. Officer Moye was struck and critically wounded. With Officer Moye down, the suspect quickly turned his attention towards Officer Paul, who immediately drew his weapon and engaged the suspect. Officer Paul was able to broadcast, "Officer down!" to the CHP Inland Communications Center. Riverside Area CHP units immediately responded to the scene, as did units from the Riverside Police Department and Riverside County Sheriff's Department. Officer Paul sustained multiple gunshot wounds to both legs, but continued his courageous fight from the supine position, moving himself from left to right, and keeping the suspect unsure of his location. The suspect advanced by taking cover behind vehicles. Although outmatched by the suspect's weapon, Officer Paul was able to actively engage the suspect in spite of his life-threatening injuries and to hold off the suspect until backup arrived. After several minutes, California Highway Patrol Officer Ryan Smith arrived on scene and his patrol vehicle immediately began taking rounds from the suspect. Officer Smith was able to exit his patrol vehicle and return fire. While actively engaging with the suspect, Officer Smith was able to locate and assist Officer Paul. Officer Smith grabbed Officer Paul's arms and pulled him out of the line of fire. Officer Smith sustained wounds to both legs, but he was able to pull Officer Paul over 100 feet to safety. While Officer Smith pulled Officer Paul to safety, California Highway Patrol Officer Vince Mendoza arrived on scene and immediately engaged the suspect using a long rifle to draw fire away from Officer Smith and Officer Paul. For over 12 minutes, with the assistance of allied agencies, multiple rounds were fired at the suspect, who was fatally shot. During the gunfight, Riverside County Sheriff's Department Deputies were able to evacuate Officer Paul from the scene via patrol vehicle and transport him to a nearby hospital. With the help of tourniquets, applied while en route to the hospital, and exceptional medical intervention at the hospital, Officer Paul survived the shooting and is expected to make a full recovery. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Paul went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Robert Paul.

Eric Paulson

Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/23/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 2:15 a.m., on February 23, 2001, Officer Eric Paulson and Officer Christopher Bougher were on routine patrol. The officers completed an enforcement stop in the city of Placentia and were traveling on surface streets, when Officer Paulson observed heavy smoke and flames emitting from the front of a residential structure on Melrose Street. As the officers exited the vehicle, they made contact with Ms. Denise Ruiz, who related there were occupants and "her baby" in the burning structure. Officer Bougher contacted the Orange County Communications Center to advise them of the situation and to request fire department response. Officer Paulson approached the front of the residence and entered the unlocked front door. Due to the heavy smoke and heat, he positioned himself on hands and knees and began to "low crawl" through the structure in an attempt to locate and remove any occupants. Officer Bougher joined him, and they began a systematic search, crawling room to room. Both officers heard a baby crying, and they quickly moved toward the sound. The officers also located several male adults and directed them to exit the building. While continuing to search for more occupants, the officers encountered a woman standing in the kitchen who appeared to be holding a baby. Due to the heavy smoke, they were unable to see the baby. The woman exited the building through the rear door, and Officer Paulson and Officer Bougher followed her. Both officers assisted the woman and baby as they walked to the side of the property and to the front of the residence. While the officers were at the side of the residence, they contacted several parties, who related there were more individuals to the rear of the residence, in a separate structure. Officer Paulson and Officer Bougher went to the rear of the residence. They knocked on the door of the separate structure and yelled to gain the attention of any possible occupants. Three adult males exited the structure. The officers subsequently assisted the three men to the front of the residence. Personnel from the Placentia Police Department arrived on the scene. As Officer Paulson advised the arriving unit of the situation, Officer Bougher and Placentia Police Officer DeCoste walked to the rear of the residence and conducted a final check of the structure. Officer Bougher and Officer DeCoste contacted another adult male at the rear of the residence. The officers assisted in the removal of this individual as personnel from Orange County Fire Department extinguished the flames.

Robert E. Paulus

Battlion Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

1/10/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 11 36 a m on January 10, 2001, while responding to another shooting involving three known victims, Battalion Chief (BC) Robert Paulus heard the CDF Command Center report a new incident of shots being fired at the Lyon's Restaurant in Grass Valley. Knowing that most other county law enforcement agencies were committed to the first incident and because he was close to Lyon's Restaurant, he responded to the incident, arriving immediately after a CHP unit. Together they were the first officers to arrive at this incident. Arriving approximately 30 seconds after the initial broadcast, and finding people in panic still fleeing from the building, there was good reason to believe the shooter was still inside the building. Concerned about the immediate threat to the lives of the patrons still inside the restaurant and the likelihood of victims needing emergency medical care, without hesitation Chief Paulus armed himself with his shotgun and made the conscious decision to enter the building, placing himself in immediate peril. Upon entering the building he observed several patrons hiding under tables and shortly thereafter met with CHP Officers David Qualls and Troy Marks. Together they then made a room by room search of the building in search of the suspect and victims. Upon entering the kitchen they discovered the body of the Manager who Chief Paulus determined had succumbed to his gunshot wounds. While Officers Marks and Qualls finished the search of the building, Chief Paulus went to the rear of the building and requested the staged ambulance and fire/ rescue units for the treatment and transport of a cook who had sustained serious gunshot wounds. After the transport of the victim, Chief Paulus continued to assist local law enforcement in securing the scene.

Jorge Paz

Game Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

10/17/2009

Special Service Award (Silver)

On October 17, 2009 Game Warden Jorge Paz was traveling on Highway 154 at the Cold Springs Bridge near Santa Ynez, when he observed a man walking westbound on the bridge. The man was walking at a slow pace, stopping every few steps, and looking down below the bridge, which dropped 400 feet to a canyon below. Warden Paz pulled off the highway, saw an abandoned truck, and asked dispatch to run a check on the vehicle's plate and for the registered owner's name. He then informed dispatch that he would be contacting the man. Warden Paz walked towards the man who continued to walk westbound, stopping and looking down below the bridge every few steps. Approximately 30 yards from the man, Warden Paz called out to him by his first name and explained he was breaking the law by loitering on the bridge. The man answered, "what does it matter if I'm gonna jump?" The man told Warden Paz that he had two murder warrants for his arrest out of Oregon. While walking toward the man, Warden Paz continued to talk to him about resolving his issues through counseling. After talking for approximately five minutes, a CHP officer arrived on the scene, walked up and stopped behind Warden Paz. Warden Paz continued to talk to the man asking if he wanted to walk off the bridge and talk about his issues. Sometimes the man insisted he had to jump and other times he would not respond. Finally, Warden Paz used his fingers to signal the CHP officer behind his back. He then grabbed the man's right arm and pulled him away from the two foot railing. The man struggled and his arm slipped out of his long sleeve shirt as he tried to pull away toward the guard rail. Warden Paz grabbed the man's left arm and executed a control hold as the CHP officer ran to the man and pulled his right arm behind his back. The two officers were able to subdue the man and place him in handcuffs. Later it was determined that the man had no criminal history, but suffered from mental illness. Warden Paz's actions, without regard for his own safety, prevented the man from jumping off the bridge to his death. The State of California takes great pride in presenting to Jorge Paz, this Silver Medal of Valor, for his extraordinary act of heroism extending above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Jason Lee Peavy

Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/10/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Jason Lee Peavy, on January 10, 2004, performed an act of heroism at risk to his personal safety in an attempt to rescue a victim from a vehicle submersed in the icy waters of the California Aqueduct. At 3:53 p.m., Officer Peavy was on routine patrol in Los Angeles County, when an unidentified citizen advised him of a serious accident that had just occurred on State Route 138 (Pearblossom Highway) near 96th Street. Officer Peavy immediately advised the Los Angeles Communications Center of this report and responded to the collision scene. Officer Peavy arrived at the scene approximately two minutes later and noted physical evidence which indicated the involved vehicle had crashed through numerous objects (sign posts, guard rail, chain link fence, telephone pole) and came to rest underneath the murky waters of the California Aqueduct. Numerous witnesses advised Officer Peavy that the driver was still inside the vehicle and pointed to an area in the middle of the aqueduct where bubbles continued to rise to the surface. Fearing for the life of the unknown driver, Officer Peavy acted quickly and fashioned an improvised lifeline out of two fifty foot lengths of rope. Officer Peavy removed his gun belt, boots and ballistic vest and tied one end of the rope to a pole at the edge of the Aqueduct. Officer Peavy then tied the other end of the rope around his waist and without hesitation heroically dove into the ice cold, swift moving Aqueduct water. Despite the strong current, Officer Peavy swam to a position over the rising bubbles and dove down. Officer Peavy struggled for several moments, but due to the dark murky water and strong current, he could not locate the submerged vehicle. Upon resurfacing, Officer Peavy realized he had been swept downstream award from the vehicle. Officer Peavy attempted the rescue a second time and swam against the current to a position over the rising bubbles. Officer Peavy dove under again, but still could not reach or see the submerged vehicle. After this second attempt, Officer Peavy was pulled back to the waters edge and assisted out of the Aqueduct by an assisting CHP Officer, Jeremy Linson. Unfortunately, the driver of the submerged vehicle did not survive the collision.

Robert Pedregon

Officer

Department of Justice

11/1/2013

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On November 1, 2013, a lone gunman walked into Terminal 3 of the Los Angeles International airport and opened fire with a semi-automatic assault rifle, killing one TSA officer and wounding seven civilians. The initial call to Airport Police dispatch was received within 60 seconds of the shooting. Los Angeles Airport Police Sergeant Steve Zouzounis acknowledged the call and was on scene just 30 seconds later, and joined immediately by five Airport Police officers responding to the shooting. David Lalicker, Brian Lopez, Robert Pedregon, Raymond Woods and Danie Yu

Trying to determine possible accomplices among the hundreds of passengers, the six officers assumed a diamond shaped "active shooter formation" and advanced on the gunman. Determining the assailant was acting alone, the officers split into two groups of three and entered from opposite ends of the concourse the shooter was located. The officers confronted him and exchanged gun fire. Due to the six officer's quick and decisive actions, the shooter was neutralized and taken into custody within four minutes after the initial "shots fired" radio call. Paramedics transported the perpetrator to a local hospital where he was treated for his injuries. The actions of these officers prevented the shooter from further injuring or fatally wounding hundreds of airport personnel and travelers.

Jose A. Peñate

Manager I

Department of Motor Vehicles

3/4/2015

Special Service Award (Silver)

On March 4, 2015, at approximately 1:30 p.m., California Department of Motor Vehicles Manager I Jose A. Peñate was informed by security guards in the Fresno Office that there was a loud confrontation taking place between several groups of young men in the lobby. Determined to assess the situation for himself, Mr. Peñate and the two security guards entered the lobby, which holds approximately 200 customers, and approached four young men, who were later identified as gang members. Mr. Peñate started talking to the young men, hoping to speed up their departure and avoid trouble. As they spoke, another group of men, also identified as gang members, entered the lobby and began shouting expletives at the first group. The two groups moved toward each other aggressively. Mr. Peñate and the security guards stepped between them and tried to usher the first group out the door, but to no avail. Realizing a fight was eminent, Mr. Peñate instructed the security guards to direct the customers in the lobby to safety, then dodging chairs that were being thrown by the gang members as the fighting commenced, Mr. Peñate maneuvered his way to the employee work area and advised employees to move away from the fighting. The security guards remained in the lobby trying to control the situation.

Jennifer Pendergast

Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/21/1993

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 21, 1993 at approximately 11 30 a m Officer Jennifer Pendergast encountered a two story home fully engulfed in flames in a residential area of Los Angeles County Several neighbors were spraying water onto the house with garden hoses. Officer Pendergast was told by one of the neighbors that there was an elderly woman who couldn't walk on her own, still inside the structure, and groans could be heard coming from within. A tow truck driver had also arrived on the scene at the same time as Officer Pendergast, and he attempted to gain entry into the house through the front door but was barred by a locked metal security screen door Both Officer Pendergast and the tow driver quickly ran around to the rear of the home to try another entrance but the heavy, extensive smoke and flames made that option impossible. Thereafter Officer Pendergast ran back to her patrol car and obtained her flashlight, leather gloves, and a fire extinguisher. She then tried to gain access through the front door, but was unsuccessful. Officer Pendergast told the tow driver to get a crow bar out of his truck so they could try and force the metal security screen door open. He returned with a large metal crowbar, attempted to pry it open but when that failed he then used the bar to punch several holes through the door which allowed him to reach inside and unlock it. Officer Pendergast and the tow driver entered the house and found it fully surrounded by smoke and flames and observed the elderly woman succumbing to the conditions, falling to the ground within five feet inside the door. Together they drug the victim outside the structure onto the front lawn. As Officer Pendergast was conducting a primary assessment of the woman's condition, the Los Angeles County Fire Department, Engine 41 arrived. Officer Pendergast continued to administer oxygen to the victim until the paramedics relieved her. The entire rescue took approximately five to ten minutes. Although Officer Pendergast and the tow driver were only inside the fully engulfed structure for about two minutes, they placed themselves dangerously close to the flames, overwhelming smoke and falling embers raining upon them while they were both inside and blowing from the windows while they worked at the front door Unfortunately, the rescuers were unable to safely re-enter the structure to save the elderly woman's two dogs who sustained fatal injuries from smoke inhalation Several news media members conducted interviews in front of the house which aired on the local evening news, and an eyewitness to the horrific scene that day gave a formal statement saying "If it wasn't for the officer and tow driver, she [his neighbor] would have died. They saved her life".

Eric L. Perkins

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

2/25/2007

Special Service Award (Silver)

On February 25, 2007, California Department of Transportation employees Eric Perkins and Arturo Arzaga were supervising a fourteen person volunteer worker program crew They were removing debris and weeds from the shoulder of State Route 60 at Etiwanda Avenue, a high traffic area in Riverside County At approximately 10 00 a m , the crew gathered for a break around the department van when a drunken motorist, being pursued by the CHP, lost control of his car and crashed into the van. The sudden impact flipped the van on its side and forced it down an embankment, trapping a man underneath, injuring five people, and scattering the rest of the volunteer crew from the crash scene Mr Perkins and Mr Arzaga immediate y called 9-1-1 and assessed their crew for injuries. Despite the heavy traffic and risk to persona safety due to the van's position on the embankment, Mr Perkins and Mr. Arzaga, with the help of their non-injured crew members, physica y lifted the van off their trapped co-worker and instructed a crew member to watch over him until the paramedics arrived. Mr. Arzaga then went to assist a woman who was unable to breathe, the impact of the car hitting the van had thrown her body forward and she was slammed, face down, into the ground He stayed with her until paramedics arrived. Mr. Perkins and Mr. Arzaga kept their composure throughout the chaos of the accident and its aftermath by lending assistance to the injured and calming the rest of the volunteer crew who were in shock As a result of their immediate actions to lift the van off and rescue the man underneath it, the crew member survived. Mr. Arzaga's assistance contributed to the woman's survival in spite of suffering severe injuries Four other crew members were treated for minor injuries and released.

Neal C. Perkins

Civil Maintenance Journeyworker

Department of Water Resources

6/8/1990

Special Act Award (Gold)

Civi Maintenance Journeyworker Neal C. Perkins, on June 8, 1990, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his personal safety and life in rescuing a severely injured pilot trapped in a burning plane At approximately 6:30 a.m., while enroute to his job at the Department of Water Resources' Lost Hills Operations Center Mr. Perkins heard sounds of a malfunctioning engine coming from a crop dusting plane overhead. Seconds later the plane hit the ground The plane began to burn upon impact as it flipped over, landing upside down in the field. Mr. Perkins immediately stopped his car and ran toward the crash site. As he came closer to the plane, he could hear the pilot calling for help. Award of the potential danger of explosion from leaking fuel and chemicals, Mr Perkins pushed his way past other observers who tried to restrain him and rushed to the aircraft Finding both doors jammed shut from the impact, the fire quickly spreading in the engine compartment and thick black smoke filling the cockpit, Mr. Perkins began kicking the door panels and windows to rescue the pilot, who was semi-conscious and hanging upside down in his safety harness. By now several bystanders, with crowbars, had joined him and were successful in forcing the door open. As the door swung open, Mr. Perkins noticed that sulfer, which crates toxic smoke when ignited, was scattered throughtout the interior of the plane. With the danger of an explosion increasing the bystanders turned fire extinguishers toward the cockpit as Mr Perkins reached into the plane and released the pilot from his harness, and carried him to safety

Bruce Kenneth Perry

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

12/28/2022

Special Service Award (Silver)

On December 28, 2022, surrounded by mountainous terrain and steep drop-offs, Equipment Operator II Ken Myers was patrolling his area in the Sierras on eastbound I-80 between Drum Forebay Road and Blue Canyon when he spotted smoke just above the exit. Mr. Myers immediately responded to the location and found a vehicle on fire. Five of the six passengers were outside of the car. Some were wandering around while the others were lying on the ground, bloodied and injured. One was almost scalped with severe cuts on his head. With a language barrier impacting communication, Mr. Myers went directly to the door of the vehicle and found the driver trapped and semi-conscious. Flames were quickly rising around and under the vehicle's hood and dash. He hastily grabbed a fire extinguisher from his truck and set to work on putting the flames out. Shortly after, colleagues Equipment Operator II Bruce Perry and Darrell VanNatta arrived on the scene to assist in battling the fire. Their combined efforts kept the fire at bay long enough to allow CAL FIRE to arrive and extinguish the fire before cutting the injured driver out of the car. The heroic acts of the three Caltrans employees—jumping into harm's way, approaching the burning car and extinguishing flames while not knowing if the car would explode—were remarkable. This quick action from a trio of Whitmore Maintenance crew members is credited for saving the life of the driver. A Placer County Fire Department Captain stated that he believes with 100 percent certainty that if the Caltrans employees were not there providing lifesaving efforts, the driver of the vehicle would have perished or suffered life-altering burn injuries. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation, Caltrans Equipment Operator II Bruce Perry for his heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Dave Peruzzaro

San Mateo Police Officer

Other

11/25/2008

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

"On November 25, 2008, at roughly 9 30 a m , numerous San Mateo police officers were dispatched to a residential robbery in progress. Sergeant Dave Peruzzaro, one of the first to arrive, approached the front door and saw the male suspect wa king down a hallway in the residence carrying a handgun. It was determined that the 24-year-o d fema e resident and her two children, ages three years and one year, were being held against their wi by the armed suspect. The victim spoke with negotiators over a cellular telephone and stated the suspect was trying to break down the door to the bedroom. She told negotiators that she was going to drop her two children from the bedroom window to safety An armored rescue vehic e was driven to the scene to attempt the rescue of the victim and her children. Sergeant Peruzzaro climbed onto the exposed roof of the armored rescue vehicle and it was driven to a position directly below the bedroom window. Sergeant Peruzzaro placed himself in a precarious and defense ess position in order to accept the children from the victim. Sergeant Peruzzaro .eaned toward the window frame and placed both his hands against the bui ding The mother of the children handed Sergeant Peruzzaro the first child who was quick y and safely passed on to other officers on the grou nd. As the second chi d was handed to Sergeant Peruzzaro, the suspect fired 10 rounds through a wa into the room where the victim was standing. Three rounds struck the victim whi e four struck the frame around the window where Sergeant Peruzzaro was accepting the ast child. As the bullets tore through the bedroom walls, Sergeant Peruzzaro kept his grasp on the child, but lost his ability to support himself and fell to the grou nd from the roof of the armored rescue vehicle. As Sergeant Peruzzaro fe , he p aced his arms around the child and twisted his own body to protect the chi d Sergeant Peruzzaro, stunned by the fall, got to his feet and ran with the child to safety, believing he was shot due to a burning pain in his upper body Ultimate y, upon medica examination, Sergeant Peruzzaro was determined not to have been struck by a bu et Tragically the mother of the two children was fatally wounded by the suspect The suspect was also located, deceased from a self-inflicted gunshot wound "

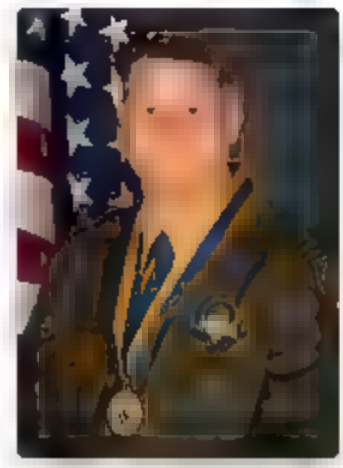
Brett Peters

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/21/2015

Special Act Award (Gold)



On February 21, 2015, at approximately 4:20 p.m., California Highway Patrol Officer Brett Peters responded to a call involving a vehicle blocking the left lane of a transition road in Oakland, California. At its highest point, the transition road is elevated approximately 100 feet above the streets, and bordered by three foot high concrete walls with railings. Upon arrival Officer Peters saw a car stopped at the highest point of the transition road. As Officer Peters got out of his patrol car, he saw the male driver get out, walk towards the railing and look over the edge. Fearing he was going to commit suicide, Officer Peters ran towards the man and grabbed him. A violent struggle ensued with the driver flailing his arms and pushing Officer Peters away. Officer Peters used an electronic control device on the man, but it had no effect. The driver again moved towards the railing and the struggle continued, with the driver pushing Officer Peters away. The driver then began climbing the railing and as he swung his legs over the side, Officer Peters grabbed a hold of his wrist and clothing. The driver's entire body dangled freely over the edge, held only by Officer Peters. Officer Peters dropped to the surface of the road to maintain his balance and keep his grip on the man. The driver pushed and kicked off of the railing to free himself, yet Officer Peters continued to hold him with great effort and determination. Additional officers arrived and the driver was finally brought over the railing safely and then taken to a hospital for psychiatric evaluation.

Aivaras Petraitis

Detective

Department of Insurance

11/13/2016

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 10 00 a m on Sunday, November 13, 2016, Detective Aivaras Petraitis performed an ocean rescue of a mother and her son off of the Ventura coast. Detective Petraitis was at Harbor Cove beach playing volleyball with his family and friends when he heard a female on the beach scream repeatedly for help Detective Petraitis saw the woman waving her hands in the air, and pointing towards the ocean. Detective Petraitis ran full sprint towards the ocean and saw the mother and son struggling in the ocean The mother was trying to reach her teenage son, who was further out in the ocean, but she was unable due to the ocean conditions. The rip currents were moving both individuals further away from the shore. Detective Petraitis went into the ocean and swam towards the mother first, as she appeared to be in the most imminent danger because she could not keep her head above water. Upon entering the ocean, a rip current pulled him under the water and he realized just how dangerous the conditions were for swimming. Detective Petraitis gained control of himself and approached the mother who was thirty yards out. He grabbed a hold of her, and swam her to the shore where his wife and friends tended to her. Detective Petraitis then swam back out into the ocean and was able to reach the teenage boy, who was forty yards out, and swim him back to the shore. Once on shore, Detective Petraitis found the mother was disoriented and unable to stand. He made sure both performed actions to release water from their stomachs and lungs until emergency personnel took over the scene. With no regard for his own safety, Detective Petraitis' heroic act saved two people from drowning in the ocean The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to Department of Insurance Detective Aivaras Petraitis

John Pfeifer

Forest Firefighter Foreman

Department of Conservation

6/22/1961

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 22, 1961, Forest Firefighter Foreman John A. Pfeifer was on vacation with his family. Cathy Cullens, age 14, and her girlfriend, Bonnie Heinlein, were swimming in the ocean when a severe riptide caught the two girls and took them out beyond the breakers into deep water. Miss Heinlein was able to return to the beach, but Miss Cullens was carried further out. Miss Heinlein began to cry for help, catching the attention of Foreman Pfeifer who was surf fishing. He immediately swam out to rescue Ms. Cullens. By this time Miss Cullens was over 150 yards from the beach and fatigued from her efforts, had gone down several times before Foreman Pfeifer reached her. Miss Cullens was unconscious after Foreman Pfeifer arrived. Once on the beach, a lifeguard and nurse were able to administer first aid to Miss Cullens. She later stated that she was completely exhausted by the time Foreman Pfeifer reached her and had no recollection of his efforts to get her back to the beach.

Michael T. Phennicie

Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/25/1998

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Michael T Phennicie, on October 25, 1998, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at risk to his personal safety when he rescued an injured party from a burning vehicle. The flames from the engine compartment entered the vehicle under the dashboard and into the passenger compartment. If Officer Phennicie had not acted as he did, the driver would have perished in the fire. At approximately 6 35 p m , Officer Phennicie was concluding an enforcement stop on a Mr. Tristan Wolfard when he heard the sound of a collision. He immediately responded towards the collision and Mr Wolfard followed Upon his arrival,

Officer Phennicie observed a solo vehicle, which had struck a bridge support. The vehicle sustained major damage, and there were flames coming from the engine compartment. Officer Phennicie observed the driver, Mr Tomas Unofre Rodriguez, unconscious and slumped over in the front seat. Officer Phennicie could not see into the remainder of the vehicle due to the smoke. The front driver side door was jammed shut due to the vehicle damage. Officer Phennicie attempted to remove Mr Rodriguez from the now partially engulfed vehicle (flames entering under the dashboard) through the driver side but was unable to do so without assistance (Mr. Rodriguez was seat-belted in the vehicle, and his legs and feet were trapped under the controls). Officer Phennicie was able to cut the driver out of the seat belt but was unable to remove him from the vehicle. Two citizens, Mr. Kenneth Ferro and Mr Jeffery Schwartz, stopped and assisted Officer Phennicie in removing Mr Rodriguez from his vehicle. All three rescuers were in danger from the direct flames and smoke and the possibility of the vehicle exploding. Once the driver was removed from the vehicle, Officer Phennicie returned to the vehicle to search for passengers He entered the vehicle through the back door, crawling on his hands and knees and searching with his hands while the flames entered the rear occupant area of the vehicle. Officer Phennicie was overcome by smoke and heat and was assisted to a safe location. Officer Phennicie was unable to provide immediate first aid or emergency medical treatment to the injured driver.

Mr Wolfard, who is an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), was able to retrieve Officer Phennicie's EMT bag from the patrol car and treat Mr. Rodriguez until additional life-saving personnel arrived. Mr. Wolfard provided oxygen, partial immobilization, and treatment for shock. There is no question that Mr. Rodriguez would have perished if not for the quick and decisive actions of Officer Phennicie and the citizens

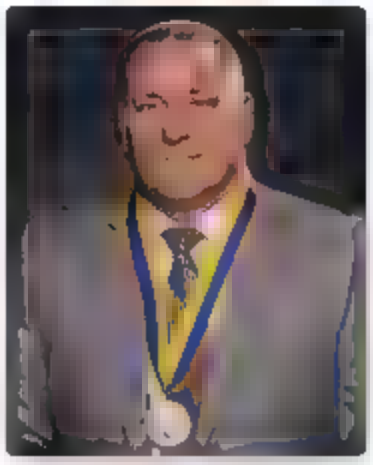
Daniel T. Pierce

Associate Warden

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

6/6/2023

Special Act Award (Gold)



On the afternoon of June 6, 2023, Associate Warden Daniel Pierce was traveling along Highway 46 returning to Wasco State Prison when he spotted a man frantically waving for help. Seeing a partially submerged vehicle in a canal, Associate Warden Pierce immediately pulled over and without hesitation rushed to the scene where one civilian responder had already arrived. Associate Warden Pierce observed that the responder was struggling to hold onto two individuals who were still inside the canal waters, unable to swim. Drawing from his experience as a former lifeguard and recognizing the dire situation, Associate Warden Pierce made a quick decision and dove into the canal despite the powerful current that was beginning to move the submerged vehicle downstream. With unwavering determination, he swam against the forceful waters and reached the two individuals who were in severe distress. Demonstrating extraordinary courage and selflessness, Associate Warden Pierce employed his own body as leverage and skillfully pushed each person up the muddy canal bank to safety. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Associate Warden Daniel Pierce for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

William L. Pierce

State Park Ranger I

Department of Parks and Recreation

5/15/1993

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 15, 1993, at 10:58 a.m., State Park Ranger William L. Pierce and another ranger saw three young boys on boogie boards swimming into a rip current at Pismo Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area. The boys were approximately 150 feet from the shore. Two more boys swam out and all five became caught in a rip current. Three boys were really struggling, trying to swim to shore. The rangers alerted the Pismo Fire Department and advised them to bring a jet ski since no lifeguard was available. At 11:01 a.m., when the rangers realized the boys were being carried further out to sea, Ranger Pierce went into the water wearing only swimming trunks and towing a rescue buoy. The water temperature was approximately 55 degrees; normally a wet suit would be worn. Two of the boys with boogie boards were able to make it to the shore. The other three boys were in serious trouble. When Ranger Pierce reached them, he had the two boys without boogie boards hold onto his rescue buoy and the third boy with the boogie board hold onto the buoy rope. Ranger Pierce proceeded to swim ashore, but the current was too strong and they were all being pulled out to sea at a rapid pace. Ranger Pierce signaled he needed assistance and struggled against the current by swimming parallel to shore for approximately 500+ feet with the three boys in tow. Ranger Pierce was finally able to get out of the rip current; he found a sand bar to stand and rest on and was then able to swim to shore. Even though Ranger Pierce was suffering from mild hypothermia and felt dizzy from a sinus infection, he declined medical treatment until the boys were treated. After the boys were attended to, Ranger Pierce allowed the medics to treat him and then he returned to work.

Matthew Pina

Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

1/12/2021

Special Service Award (Silver)

On January 12, 2021, Caltrans Equipment Operator II Matthew Pina was on shift as a San Francisco / Oakland Bay Bridge Emergency Service Tow Truck Operator. At approximately 6:00 p.m., Mr. Pina responded to an abandoned vehicle parked on the eastern span of the bridge. It was located adjacent to heavy evening commute traffic in dark and foggy conditions. Mr. Pina found the vehicle abandoned and looked around for the driver. He intercepted a radio call regarding a pedestrian walking on the bridge nearby. Mr. Pina continued driving to locate the pedestrian. He found the pedestrian on the outer railing of the bridge. Mr. Pina used his tow truck as a shield and protective barrier to traffic, and contacted the distressed young man who appeared to be contemplating suicide. He told Mr. Pina that nobody loved him, and he did not want to live. Mr. Pina spoke compassionately and in a calm manner to the young man. During their dialogue, Mr. Pina encouraged him to live and was able to safely guide the young man to climb back over the railing. He continued the compassionate dialogue with the young man until the California Highway Patrol arrived on scene. It is because of Mr. Pina's actions that this young man is still alive. With no regard for his own safety, Mr. Pina went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Transportation Equipment Operator II Matthew Pina.

Eric Pohrman

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/27/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 6 43 a m. on August 27, 2020, a private civilian airp ane was departing from Benton Airpark and crashed just after take-off From his office window, California Highway Patrol Sergeant Jeff Edgerton noticed the private airp ane was attempting to takeoff at an unusual a titude that was immediately apparent to him was not consistent with sustained flight Sergeant Edgerton shouted to everyone in the office that a plane was about to crash. The airplane departed the runway complex, and crashed into a steep, brush-filled ravine. Officer Eric Pohrman was the first officer out the door Officer Pohrman, Officer Jeffery Hatcher and Officer Erik Mallory arrived within approximately 30 seconds of the crash. Lieutenant Michael Berry and CHP personnel went down the steep embankment and found the first victim laying 10 feet from the burning fuselage. Upon further investigation, they found a second victim who had been thrown 20 feet from the aircraft and was actively on fire. Officer Pohrman utilized a patrol vehicle fire extinguisher to put out the fire on and around the second victim. Lieutenant Berry, Officer Hatcher, and Officer Mallory picked up the second victim and moved him away from the flame engulfed fuselage Officer Pohrman went back towards the fully engulfed wreckage, to assist the first victim The aircraft's onboard oxygen tank caught fire, causing a large secondary explosion. Sergeant Edgerton, Officer Pohrman, and Officer Hatcher were able to pull the first victim away from the burning aircraft. Sadly, the only two remaining occupants of the aircraft remained trapped inside and perished Officer Pohrman directed the arriving emergency personnel to set up in a way to prevent the fire from advancing onto the rescued victims and CHP personnel Officer Pohrman and CHP personnel carried the injured victims up the steep embankment to awaiting ambulances. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Pohrman went above and beyond the call of duty The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Eric Pohrman

Mark Pope

Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/2/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officers Harris, Matulonis, and Pope, on April 2, 2004, combined efforts and performed an act of heroism at great risk to their own personal safety to rescue a suicidal victim from jumping from the Oakland Bay Bridge. At 7:10 p.m., the California Highway Patrol Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Team was requested to respond to the Oakland Bay Bridge to an incident involving a suicidal subject. Earlier in the day, a suicidal man climbed over the south rail on the upper deck of the Oakland Bay Bridge and perched himself on a six inch wide steel beam. This location is approximately 240 feet above the water of the San Francisco Bay. The man sat down on the beam and began to cut his arms with a razor blade. The San Francisco Police Department crisis negotiator team was requested, responded, and communicated with the man for several hours to no avail. The SWAT team leader began to formulate a plan of action to rescue/apprehend the man from his location that included SWAT Team members rappelling over the side of the bridge. Shortly after 11:00 p.m. the man appeared visibly tired and suffering from hypothermia when he escalated his self-mutilation with the razor blade and moved to a triangular support beam on the Bridge structure and began to lie down. This location afforded the best opportunity for a successful rescue. Officers Harris, Matulonis, and Pope geared themselves with rappel safety equipment and safety lines. Officer Matulonis took a position on the east side of the beam. Both officers simultaneously rappelled to and moved onto the beam, advancing toward the suicidal man's position. As soon as the man observed the officers approaching, he lunged at Officer Matulonis and physically engaged him. Officer Matulonis grabbed the lunging man with his arms, and Officer Harris swiftly moved in to assist and grab the combative subject to attempt to place a safety system around his waist. The man continued to violently struggle without regard to his own safety or the safety of the rappelling officers as he tried to bite, scratch, and pull both officers off of the beam. Officer Pope rappelled onto the beam to assist Officers Harris and Matulonis in subduing the man. All three rappelling officers were now struggling to prevent a totally unrestrained and extremely combative subject from falling to his death. Due to the precarious nature of the situation, a less then lethal beanbag round was fired at the man and struck the right side of his back. This momentarily stunned him and finally enabled and besieged officers to place a safety harness and a safety line on the man. As a result of the extraordinary and heroic efforts of the three SWAT members, the man was raised and moved over the Bridge rail for a successful rescue.

James M. Portilla

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/24/1996

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 24, 1996, at approximately 1:33 a.m., Officer Portilla and Officer Ralph Casillas, Jr. were on routine patrol northbound on Interstate 405 north of State Route 118. The officers observed a black Chevrolet truck traveling at a high rate of speed through a freeway construction zone. The suspect vehicle exited Interstate 405 at Rinaldi Street, failing to stop for the posted stop sign. The suspect vehicle, driven by Mr. Terry Parker, proceeded westbound on Rinaldi Street from Sepulveda Boulevard, at which point Officer Casillas activated the patrol vehicle's forward overhead red lights, initiating an enforcement stop. Mr. Parker failed to yield to the patrol vehicle, and the pursuit continued until he reached his residence. He exited the vehicle and entered his residence. After being refused entry into the residence, Officer Casillas directed Officer Portilla to move to the southeast side of the residence while he moved southwest of the front door of the residence. Officer Portilla took cover behind a tree to the southeast of the front door. Suddenly, Mr. Parker fired between four and seven rounds from his 9mm semi-automatic pistol at the two officers. As Officer Casillas was struck by three of Mr. Parker's rounds, he drew his service pistol and fired four rounds at Mr. Parker. Fearing for Officer Casillas, Officer Portilla fired 12 rounds at Mr. Parker, causing him to retreat back into the residence. As a result of his wounds, Officer Casillas fell backwards and landed on his back in front of the residence. While lying on his back, Officer Casillas advised Officer Portilla he had been shot. Officer Portilla then broadcasted, "Officer down," and went to the aid of Officer Casillas.

Officer Portilla grabbed Officer Casillas underneath his arms and dragged him to a position of cover, directly south of their CHP vehicle. Officer Casillas was treated at the scene and transported to Holy Cross Medical Center where he underwent treatment for gunshot wounds. Officer Casillas subsequently recovered from his wounds. Neither Officer Portilla nor Mr. Parker sustained injury from the exchange of gunfire. Mr. Parker fled the immediate area on foot via the rear door of the residence. He was eventually located by officers but took his own life before he could be arrested.

Joshua Potter

Fire Apparatus Engineer

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

8/5/2011

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 5, 2011, at approximately 6:30 p.m., off duty Fire Apparatus Engineer Joshua Potter was with his family at the Princeton Harbor in Half Moon Bay when he heard a man yelling for help. Engineer Potter saw a small boat had overturned approximately 300 yards from shore and a man with no life jacket was struggling in the water. Engineer Potter entered the frigid ocean water without any rescue equipment or a flotation device and began swimming towards the victim, a 64 year old man. Others began to help, including a person in a kayak. As Engineer Potter approached the man, the kayaker had already reached him and the victim was holding onto the kayak to stay afloat. A man with a Zodiac inflatable boat also made his way to the victim to assist. As the victim was clinging to the kayak, it began to fill with water and sink. Engineer Potter and the other rescuers quickly put the man into the Zodiac boat and Engineer Potter began evaluating his medical condition. He stayed with the man until he was able to transfer care to the first responders.

Charles Potthast

State Park Attendant

Department of Parks and Recreation

6/8/1963

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 8, 1963, State Park Attendant Charles Potthast was on boat patrol at the Salton Sea State Park with a Park Aid and a Fish and Game Warden when they saw a small boat containing three people riding low in the choppy sea. The small boat swamped and it was immediately obvious that the occupants were non-swimmers. Two of the victims, a father and son, clutched each other frantically, screaming for help, submerging with each wave. Mr. Potthast quickly guided the patrol boat to the scene and without regard for his own safety, dove into the water to render assistance. He first secured a floating cushion and thrust it into the hands of the separate victim, then he swam to the struggling pair. After several tries, and with great danger to himself, he succeeded in separating the two, helping them first to the cushions and then into the boats that had arrived on the scene. Mr. Potthast, who is not a trained lifeguard, remained in the water, passed a tow-line through the bow of the swamped boat and only then allowed himself to be taken aboard the patrol boat.

Jeronimo Prado

Caltrans Maintenance Area Superintendent

Department of Transportation

7/15/2025

Special Service Award (Silver)

On Wednesday, March 13, 2024, at about 12 38 p m , Ca trans Maintenance Area Superintendent, Jerry Prado, was about to enter the eastbound freeway at Grand Avenue in the City of Walnut, California. As he approached the on-ramp, he saw something unusual —a young man standing on the bridge, looking down at the traffic below The man was climbing on the safety railing, putting himself in extreme danger. At first, Mr Prado thought the man might be watching an incident on the freeway below, but something felt off Without pause, Mr Prado pulled over to check. As Mr. Prado exited his vehicle, he realized the situation was much worse than he had initially thought. The young man was still climbing edging closer to a tragic fall. Without a second thought, Mr. Prado ran toward him. Acting on instinct, he grabbed the young man and pulled him away from the railing to safety. As he held onto him, Mr Prado saw that the young man was in deep emotional distress. This was more than just a physical rescue— it was an emotional intervention. Mr. Prado's compassionate embrace he ped ca m the young man, offering reassurance when he needed it most. Other drivers saw what was happening and stopped to help. Emergency services were called, and within moments, officers from the California Highway Patrol, Los Angeles County Sheriffs, paramedics and ambulances arrived. The young man was taken to receive care, and authorities ensured his well being. What made this moment so remarkable was not just Mr. Prado's quick thinking, but the immense personal risk he took to save a life. He had no way of knowing the young man's mental state or if he was armed. He also faced the real danger of being pulled over the railing himself— falling 30 feet onto live traffic below Mr Prado's bravery overrode any fear or hesitation for his personal safety His selflessness that day made the difference between life and death Mr Prado serves as an inspiration of the impact one person can have in a moment of crisis, no matter the risk. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation, Maintenance Area Superintendent Jerry Prado, for his heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty

Melvin Pratt

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/16/1971

Special Act Award (Gold)

Officer Melvin Pratt arrived at the scene of an accident on the Pomona Freeway in the Hacienda Heights area and found a truck burning with considerable black smoke surrounding both vehicles. Officer Pratt was told the driver was still in the cab of the truck. Officer Pratt stepped upon the running board and reached into the vehicle for what appeared to be the driver lying on the floor boards. At that moment, an explosion occurred and propelled Officer Pratt off the truck and onto the ground. As he arose, a bystander shouted to him "He is coming out!" and Officer Pratt saw the driver lying near the right front of the truck completed surrounded by flames. Officer Pratt went to the driver and pulled him from the fire; a 16 year old bystander wet the driver down with a garden hose.

Douglas W. Prentiss

Officer

California Highway Patrol

11/20/1999

Special Act Award (Gold)

On November 20, 1999, at approximately 1:00 a.m., Officer Douglas W Prentiss, was on patro with his partner, Officer Timothy A. Synder, on the westbound Ventura Freeway In Encino, California, when he received a radio call of a solo traffic co ision Upon their arriva , the officers observed a vehic e over the side of the freeway They were advised by a motorist that a person was trapped inside the burning vehicle. Both officers exited their vehicle and proceeded towards the burning vehicle. As the officers ran down the embankment, they encountered a wall of fire engu fing the rear of the vehicle and nearby brush Officer Snyder observed a solo fema e occupant unconscious in the driver's seat He attempted to open the driver's door, but it was too badly damaged Officer Prentiss struck the locked passenger side door window with his metal flashlight. After three attempts, he was ab e to shatter the window. In the process, he cut his hand, but he was able to open the door. Officer Snyder observed the driver's seat belt to be in place, so he took his pocketknife and cut through it. Officer Prentiss noted the rear passenger compartment was on fire, and smoke and fumes were quickly traveling toward the driver's area He also noted the driver had blood on her face and pants He attempted to extricate her from the vehicle by placing his arms around her but lost his grip due to the blood that covered his hands. Officer Synder then exchanged p aces with

Officer Prentiss and pried the right side door open wider Officer Prentiss, seeing the lap seat belt was still in place, cut the belt however, the victim was still pinned behind the wheel and remained unconscious. The officers could feel the flames getting c oser, and although the car was filling with smoke and fumes, the officers continued in their efforts to extricate the victim Officer Prentiss pushed the victim's ower torso whi e Officer Synder pu ed on her upper torso Their efforts were successfu , and the victim was removed from the burning wreckage. They quickly removed her from harm's way. Within seconds, the vehicle was totally engulfed in flames The victim was treated for her injuries and transported to the hospital.

Phil Pridmore

Wildlife Habitat Supervisor II

Department of Fish and Wildlife

3/9/1995

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 9, 1995, Phil Pridmore, Wildlife Habitat Supervisor II, and Ken Aasen, Sr. Biologist Supervisor/Marine Fisheries, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to their personal safety in the rescue of a woman who was stranded for over four hours in the devastating 1995 floods of the Napa River. She clung to a post in a submerged vineyard after her car sank in the river. The morning of March 9, 1995, the Napa River had flooded its banks, quickly engulfing roads and bridges in the area. Mr. Aasen and Mr. Pridmore started out in their dinghy to back up two Department wardens who were attempting to rescue a woman from a submerged vineyard. They saw the wardens' boat being swept into the vines, where it became immobilized, so they decided to follow the current down to a tree line where they hoped to work their way up to the woman. Their small dinghy was quickly slammed into a tree and sank in less than five seconds. By standing on submerged tree branches they managed to retrieve the boat, dump out the water, removed the motor and fuel tank and try again. Working together, they struggled to reach the woman by pulling the boat along vineyard guide wires. When he could touch ground and keep his head above water, Mr. Pridmore would slip over the side and pull the boat against the current while Ken pulled along the guide wires. When the current became too swift, Mr. Aasen maneuvered the boat across the vines and wires, while Mr. Pridmore continued in the water until he reached an area 50 yards from the woman, where the strong current had pulled out the vines and guide wires. He couldn't swim against the current so he talked her into letting go of the post and caught her as she floated by. Mr. Aasen managed to maneuver the boat to the same row Mr. Pridmore and the woman were floating down. They got aboard and started across the current to a waiting ambulance, but their oarlock broke and they were swept away by the fast current. The wardens had freed their boat by this time and were able to make their way to their dinghy and tow it back.

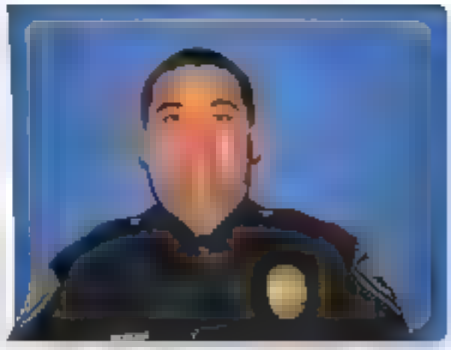
Michael Purdy

Oxnard Police Department, Officer

Other

7/1/2006

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor



On July 1, 2006, Officer Purdy and Sergeant Jack Kujawa made a traffic stop that resulted in a male passenger firing on the two officers injuring Sergeant Kujawa with a gunshot in the face. The gunman then exchanged fire with Officer Purdy, who was wounded in both legs and right forearm. After falling backwards, Officer Purdy achieved a sitting position and issued a fatal shot to the chest of the suspect.

David J. Qualls

Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/10/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 11 36 a m , on January 10, 2001, Officer David Qualls and Officer Troy Marks monitored a ca l of shots being fired at the Lyon's Restaurant in an unincorporated part of Nevada County Upon their arrival, the officers noted numerous people running from the front entrance of the restaurant The officers were the first aw enforcement personnel to arrive on the scene. Severa individuals advised them of a man down with gunshot wounds in the rear parking lot. Both officers drew their weapons and cautiously approached the rear of the bu ding. They observed a man lying on his back, covered in blood The victim was ater identified as Mr. R. Senuty, a cook in the restaurant Officer Qualls ca ed out to Mr Senuty to ascertain his condition and determine the location of the suspect Mr Senuty indicated the suspect was still inside the restaurant with other patrons Because of the imminent threat to human life, and despite the fact they were p acing themselves in immediate peril, the officers made a conscious decision to enter the building. This decision was based on the officers' firm belief the suspect was inside and that it was highly likely he would continue to shoot patrons Officers Qualls and Marks began searching from room to room for the suspect During the search, they were joined by Battalion Chief Rob Paulus from the Ca ifornia Department of Forestry In the rear kitchen area, the officers found the body of the restaurant manager who had been shot to death. Chief Paulus assisted the officers with searching the rest of the bu ding, and after a short time, they were ab e to determine the suspect had left the premises. After completing the search for the suspect, Officers Qua s and Marks took steps to secure the crime scene, preserve evidence, and identify witnesses. Once additional personne arrived on the scene, an extensive search of the area was initiated. Officers Qualls and Marks also assisted with this effort

Michael Qualls

Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/11/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)

On Apri 11, 2020, at approximate y 10 28 a m , Ca ifornia Highway Patrol Officer Michae Qua s responded to a call reporting a possibly suicidal male pedestrian sitting on the 3-foot concrete wall on the edge of so thbound Interstate 5 overcrossing at Garfie d Avenue Officer Qualls performed a traffic break and brought all the traffic to a ha t He observed the man sitting on the concrete wall with both feet hanging over the edge of the 24-foot drop onto Garfie d Avenue As Officer Qualls approached him, the man repositioned himself and used both hands to hang over Garfield Avenue Officer Qualls ran towards him to prevent him from fa ing By the time Officer Qualls reached the man, he was hanging over the edge by one hand. Officer Qua s co rageo s y, and at great risk to himse f, eaned over the edge of the concrete wall and grabbed the man's arm with both hands to prevent him from fa ing. Once Officer Qua s estab ished a secure grip, he used his eft hand to request that dispatch send additional officers. Officer Qua s continued to hang onto the man as he dangled over Garfield Avenue. A motorcyc ist stopped to assist Officer Qua s and eaned over the concrete wall to grab the man's other arm Together, Officer Qualls and the motorcyclist were able to pu the man back over the edge to safety Officer Qualls placed the man in handcuffs, but he was physica y resistive, kicking and moving sporadically Three more officers arrived on scene and they worked together to restrain the man and to keep him from harming himself. Officer Qua s transported the man to a nearby hospita With no regard for his own safety, Officer Qualls went above and beyond the ca of duty The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Meda of Valor to California Highway Patro Officer Michael Qualls

Gerald Quigley

Fire Apparatus Engineer

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/19/1970

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 19, 1970, Fire Apparatus Engineer Gerald Quigley performed and extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his own personal safety and life by saving the life of an individual trapped inside a century-old mine shaft. Five Division of Forestry employees were awarded the Medal of Valor for their participation in what was described as the "Most difficult and dangerous operation of rescuing an unconscious man." 130 feet below the surface and 2000 feet from the entrance of the century-old Hazard Mine on Volcano Creek near Foresthill in Placer County, California. The incident occurred when one of the mine owners and his nephew, entered the mine on an exploration trip. The owner was apparently overcome by lack of air and fell unconscious, the younger nephew barely escaped himself. the young man summoned help from the Foresthill Forest Fire Station. Assistant State Forest Rangers Campbell, Dougherty, Fire Apparatus Engineers Hamilton, Quigley and Fire Fighter Mower responded to the call for help. A rescue plan was formulated which eventually included other Division of Forestry personnel, inmates from the Iron Mountain Conservation Camp and volunteers who assisted in the rescue efforts. One volunteer died during the rescue.

Michael Quinliven

Tree Maintenance Supervisor

Department of Transportation

7/29/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 29, 2018, at 4:00 p.m., California Department of Transportation Tree Maintenance Supervisor Michae (Mike) Quinliven was working on Highway 20 in Mendocino County when the Ranch Fire began to pick up momentum. This fire was part of the Mendocino Complex fire, the .argest reported fire complex in California history The Ranch Fire burned over 400 000 acres, killing one firefighter, and injuring three people over more than a month As Mr Quinliven arrived at the scene of the fire, he quickly realized that the fire had potential to jump the highway and begin burring on both sides. The smoke was so thick that Mr Quinliven drove out approximately two miles to contact a Ca ifornia Highway Patrol (CHP) officer, who ca ed in the fire Mr Quin iven asked CHP to c ose the road because he could not see, and the roads were no longer safe Sudden y, on his way back into the active fire and as he was cresting the hill, he saw a arge column of smoke and he immediately knew that the fire had jumped the highway and began burning on both sides of the road Mr. Quinliven made the decision to remain in the area, until CHP arrived, to ensure that all vehic es driving through got out of the fire safely As traffic was backed up heading westbound, Mr Quinliven took to the east bound number one lane with his emergency ights on and drove right into the fire. He guided a tanker truck carrying gaso ine out of the flames due to his concern about the possibility of an explosion Then, Mr Quin iven found Ms. Newman and her kids. The Newman family was pu ed over in a turn out, trapped by the flames and thick smoke. Suddenly, terror set in on Ms Newman Then, out of nowhere, there was tapping on Ms Newman's vehic e window It was Mr Quinliven who immediately offered assistance Outside of his truck, he felt the raging heat from the fire and realized the true intensity of the flames Shie ding his head and face with only his hardhat and his arms, he was ab e to knock on the Ms. Newman's vehic e window and advised the mother and her three chi dren to follow him. With near zero visibility, using on y the center doub e ye ow ines for guidance, he drove in front of the vehicle and guided them through the smoke and fire to safety Once the tanker truck and vehicle were safe y out, Mr Quin iven remained in the area to assist law enforcement with evacuating approximately one mile of traffic With no regard for his own safety, Mr Quin iven went above and beyond the call of duty The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Va or to Ca ifornia Department of Transportation Tree Maintenance Supervisor Michae Quin iven

Michael Quinliven

Tree Maintenance Supervisor

Department of Transportation

7/2/2018

Special Service Award (Silver)

On July 2, 2018, at 4:30 p.m., California Department of Transportation Tree Maintenance Supervisor Michael (Mike) Quinliven was off duty when he found himself behind what he thought was a traffic collision. He stopped to help and quickly realized it was not a collision, but a murder scene. The shooting occurred just moments before he arrived, involving a father and son. With no idea whether the shooter was nearby, Mr. Quinliven immediately pulled them from the vehicle and began administering first aid. This was a very difficult task to perform, as both of them had multiple gunshot wounds to their heads and were severely bleeding. Despite the quick action and great efforts to resuscitate them, the father was pronounced deceased at the scene. The son survived transport to the hospital, due to the first aid administered by Mr. Quinliven, unfortunately, the son passed away several days later. The shooter had opened fire on the them, then fled the scene on foot, and was arrested the next morning. With no regard to his own safety, and not knowing whether the shooter was still around, Mr. Quinliven went above and beyond the call of duty and put himself in harm's way to help save the father and son. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation Tree Maintenance Supervisor Michael Quinliven.

Erik Quisenberry

Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

4/12/2005

Special Act Award (Gold)

On April 12, 2005 at approximately 5:00 p.m., California Highway Patrol Sergeant Erik Quisenberry of the Willows Area CHP office was off-duty and shopping with his wife at Costco in Chico, California. Sergeant Quisenberry heard a cry for help from an office located near the check out stand where he was waiting. Thinking he was possibly going to aid in a medical situation he rushed over to help. As Sergeant Quisenberry entered a small office he noticed a man inside physically assaulting a female employee. The woman appeared to be fighting for her life. Sergeant Quisenberry saw the man strike two times towards the woman's throat with a small knife, he also noticed the woman was already bleeding from the neck. Sergeant Quisenberry was unarmed, and without hesitation, identified himself as a peace officer and confronted the man with the knife. Sergeant Quisenberry grabbed the suspect's hand, wrestled the man to the ground, and took the knife from him. Sergeant Quisenberry, with the aid of two other Costco employees, held the man on the ground until Chico Police Officers arrived to place the suspect in custody. Sergeant Quisenberry's actions during this rescue were responsible for saving the life of another.

James Rajskup

Fire Apparatus Engineer-Paramedic

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

4/30/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire Captain Timothy Main and Fire Apparatus Engineer-Paramedic James Rajskup, performed an act of heroism at risk to their own personal safety when they entered a burning home upon receiving word from neighbors that a 98-year old woman was trapped inside and after a thorough search throughout the home under extreme dangerous fire conditions. On April 30, 2003, at 10 28 a m in the town of San Martin, Santa Clara County, Captain Main entered into the house from the rear door He moved through the kitchen to the hallway and down the hall to the first bedroom The search of the third bedroom was limited due to the extension of fire in the room Captain Main was retreating to the hallway near the kitchen when Paramedic Rajskup entered the kitchen and formulated a plan to search the residence a second time. As the temperature was increasing rapidly and the visibility was decreasing they again started a right hand search from the kitchen hallway junction Upon entering the bedroom Captain Main located the victim on the floor under some blankets. He notified Paramedic Rajskup and that the victim was located and being removed to the rear of the building The victim was treated including Captain Main and Paramedic Rajskup.

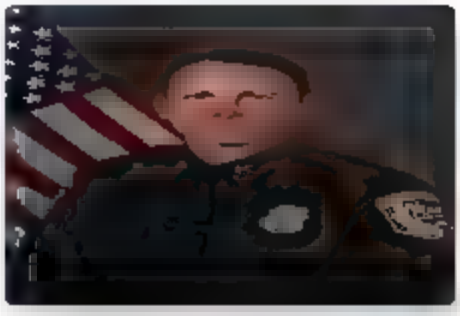
Shawn Raley

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/26/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)



On July 26, 2018, during the Carr Fire, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Shawn Raley and Fire Captain Specialist Darren Stewart persevered in their duties at great personal risk amidst erratic fire behavior and an unprecedented, deadly fire weather event. Captain Raley and Captain Specialist Stewart made multiple trips in the Stanford Hills and Land Park subdivisions and successfully evacuated residents who had not previously been ordered to leave. While they were conducting the evacuations, conditions deteriorated to the point that their own lives were in peril. While leading civilian evacuees out of the neighborhood, Captain Raley learned that a family of three was still at home in the Stanford Hills subdivision and made the decision to return to help them evacuate. During this time, a fire tornado was seen approaching the area. Captain Raley reached the family and loaded them into his truck. As they were leaving the community, they joined Captain Specialist Stewart, who was driving his own truck. Both vehicles were forced to travel slowly due to the heavy smoke. Suddenly both trucks were struck by flying debris, rocks and embers. The vehicles began to shake violently and the passenger windows shattered as they were hit by the fire tornado. Captain Specialist Stewart saw a person attempting to get into his truck and directed him to climb into the back seat. He then saw a second man running toward him wrapped in a fire shelter. Captain Specialist Stewart directed the second man, who had been operating a bulldozer that was damaged by the fire tornado, into the back seat as well. Despite the damage to their vehicles, Captain Raley and Captain Specialist Stewart were able to drive away from the danger and deliver their passengers to other first responders, who treated their injuries and evacuated them from the area. Captain Raley and Captain Specialist Stewart saved the family of three, another individual and the bulldozer operator whose vehicle burnt during the fire tornado. With no regard for his own safety, Captain Raley went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Shawn Raley

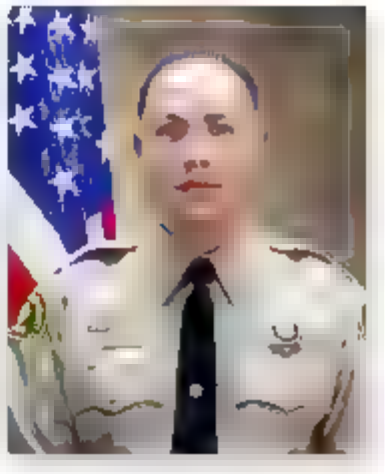
Arturo Ramirez

Deputy

Department of Justice

6/15/2013

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor



On June 15, 2013, Deputy Arturo Ramirez responded to a 911 call describing an apartment fire in the 14000 block of Rodeo Drive in the City of Victorville. Upon arriving, he witnessed that several units were already on fire and requested that the fire department expedite its response and that additional deputies were needed to help assist with the evacuation. When residents reported people trapped in an apartment engulfed in flames and smoke, Deputy Ramirez ran up the stairs and entered the apartment. Inside he discovered a woman holding a five-month old baby and an 11-year old girl who was clutching a toddler. Deputy Ramirez guided all through the thick smoke downstairs to safety. Despite suffering smoke inhalation and blurred vision, upon being told a little girl was still inside, and seeing tiny hands pounding on the second floor window, he charged back up the stairs. Locating the little girl, he cradled her in his arms and ran down the stairs so both could be treated by paramedic personnel arriving on the scene.

Robert Rand

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/10/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 10, 2008, California Highway Patrol Officer Robert Rand arrived on scene of a suicide attempt in-progress in the City of Laguna Hills. He found CHP Officer Daniel LaRosa and Orange County Sheriff's deputies holding on to the fingers of a woman who was attempting to jump off the Alicia Parkway overpass above southbound Interstate-5. Officer Rand immediately climbed over the safety fence and negotiated the three-to-four-inch wide ledge 50 – 60 feet above the traffic on I-5 to reach the woman. Orange County Sherriff's Deputy M. Wehrli followed behind Officer Rand to provide assistance with rescue efforts. Officer Rand grabbed the woman's right arm just as she broke free from the other officer's grasp. The woman was now dangling above the freeway and began to flail in an attempt to break free from Officer Rand, but Officer Rand held on to the woman with one hand as Deputy Wehrli held on to Officer Rand. Orange County Sheriff's Deputy B. Gunsolley, climbed over the fence and positioned himself on the opposite side of the woman for additional support. Several minutes passed before the Orange County Fire Department arrived with a ladder truck, which successfully removed the woman and officers from the overpass ledge. The woman was then taken into custody by Orange County Sheriff's Deputies.

Gary Ratliff

Caltrans Landscape Leadworker

Department of Transportation

7/7/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 7, 2001 at approximately 2:00 p.m., the Victorville area was experiencing severe thunderstorms and flash floods. Terry Gillich, a Caltrans Equipment Operator II, Gary Ratliff, a Caltrans Landscape Leadworker and a private citizen, Mr. Jim Payne, observed a pickup truck caught in floodwater. It had overturned onto its driver's side. As they went to get a closer look, the truck door opened and Ryan Bird, age 14, started screaming and waving for help. Two Highway Patrol Officers arrived on the scene. Mr. Gillich entered the water in his plow truck to attempt a rescue, but the current was too strong and the plow truck began sliding sideways. The pickup truck was being pushed downstream by the current with the young man screaming for help. All five rescuers jumped into the water. Mr. Payne helped Mr. Milliken, age 75, who had climbed through the passenger door and fell into the water, the current slamming him against the undercarriage of the truck as it did to Ryan Bird who had also climbed out. Mr. Payne dragged Mr. Milliken to Mr. Ratliff and they passed him to safety with an officer caring for him. Holding on to the Caltrans vehicle, the men formed a human chain and helped Ryan Bird and Nathan Milliken, age 14, to safety. Mrs. Milliken age 70, and Natalie Shoemaker, 16, were still trapped in the vehicle. The water kept rising and the truck began to overturn. Mrs. Milliken was having a difficult time exiting the vehicle and when she finally climbed out and jumped into the water, she was pinned to the undercarriage by the strong current. Breaking the chain, Mr. Gillich grabbed the grill to help stabilize the vehicle while Mr. Payne, also breaking the chain, fought the current, reached Mrs. Milliken, and kept her from being swept downstream, aided by Apple Valley Fire Department personnel who had just arrived at the scene. Once Mrs. Milliken was out, Natalie Shoemaker quickly exited the truck and jumped to safety. All victims escaped serious injury. After confirming everyone was safe, Mr. Ratliff and Mr. Gillich continued their storm patrol.

Branson 'Skip' Ratsep

Fire Apparatus Engineer Paramedic

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/2/1998

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Tom Oldag, Fire Apparatus Engineer Paramedics Sean Norman, James Mathias and Branson 'Skip' Ratsep on February 2, 1998 and February 3, 1998, performed an act of heroism at risk to their personal safety when they took part in the rescue of numerous citizens stranded in their homes and cars surrounded by rising flood waters. On Monday, during a 17-hour period from 5 30 p m February 2, 1998 to 10:30 a.m. on February 3, 1998 at Pescadero CDF Station 59 Captain Tom Oldag Fire Apparatus Engineer Paramedics Sean Norman, James Mathias, and Skip Ratsep, assisted by mutual aid from Half Moon Bay Fire District took part in the rescue of 16 citizens, ages 9 months to 86 years old, who were trapped in the top story of a two story apartment complex. In order to rescue the last five victims from the flooded apartment complex, it was necessary to bore through a wall in order to access the victims The victims had to be taken out with 200 feet of rescue line through a strong current while (the rescuers) being careful to avoid numerous floating objects including vehicles, furniture, parts of homes and debris and propane tanks during the rescue operations. In addition to rescuing stranded citizens from the apartment complex, Engine 59 and Engine 1775's crew rescued numerous citizens stranded in their vehicles due to rising water on Pescadero Road The waters had formed a lake on top of Pescadero Road that was 1/2 mile wide and two to five feet deep. Victims were being pulled up onto the CDF engine as their cars began to float away Along with these victims, Engine 59 and Engine 1775 rescued additional citizens in town who were trapped by the rising flood waters In all, Engine 59 and 1775 transported over 16 citizens through the floodwaters to the safety of the Pescadero Station. Without the heroic actions of these four gentlemen, lives would have been at risk and certainly lost.

Christina K. Raughton

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/2/2000

Special Service Award (Silver)

On July 2, 2000, at approximately 11:03 p.m., Officer Christina K. Raughton and her partner, Officer Kevin S. Craig, were dispatched to a traffic collision on State Route 1, Pacific Coast Highway. This portion of the roadway is located near Sycamore Canyon in Ventura County, 10 miles south of Oxnard. The winding highway runs parallel to the Pacific Ocean and has a steep, rocky drop-off to the ocean level south of the highway. The officers arrived within 10 minutes and were the first emergency personnel on the scene. The vehicle had run off the roadway over a cliff, crashed over large rocks, and landed at the surf line of the Pacific Ocean approximately 66 feet below the roadway. The vehicle incurred major damage, particularly to its rear end. The driver, Mr. Adam Martinez, and right front passenger, Ms. Heather Martin, wore seat belts and suffered only minor injuries. Ms. Lauren Butterworth, the 16-year old female passenger in the rear seat, was unrestrained and was ejected through the rear window of the vehicle. She came to rest below the vehicle, which was precariously balanced on a large rock in the heavy surf. She had broken her left femur, sustained head injuries, and was in and out of consciousness. After Mr. Martinez helped Ms. Martin out of the vehicle and to higher ground, he heard moaning and returned to the vehicle to find Ms. Butterworth in the surf below the vehicle. Mr. Martinez climbed down and pulled her up under several rocks that formed a small cove above the tide level. They were still occasionally struck by waves, but he could not move to higher ground without abandoning Ms. Butterworth. When Officers Craig and Raughton arrived on the scene, Officer Raughton immediately advised the Ventura Area dispatch center of the situation and requested additional assistance. Officer Raughton then climbed down to the rock and, while kneeling, supported Ms. Butterworth's head and neck until the arrival of the emergency medical personnel. Although the rock the officers and Ms. Butterworth were on was higher than the vehicle, waves continued to wash over them, soaking both officers. Had Officer Raughton been unwilling to place herself in jeopardy and provide assistance to Officer Craig, both Mr. Martinez and Ms. Butterworth would very likely have been swept out to sea. Although Mr. Martinez was able to swim, Ms. Butterworth was in danger of drowning due to her injuries. The cold ocean temperature, rough surf, jagged rocks, slippery footing, and absence of any lighting all contributed to the hazard

Stevon F. Rawlinson

Pacific State Hospital Groundsman

Department of Mental Hygiene

6/30/1973

Special Act Award (Gold)

Stevon F Rawlinson saw a patient walking on the railroad track that adjoined the hospital. Seeing an oncoming train, Mr Rawlinson leapt over a six-foot chain link fence, struggled through barbed wire and scaled an embankment to pull the struggling, mentally ill patient from the path of an oncoming train. Had it not been for Mr. Rawlinson, the patient would surely have perished under the wheels of the on-rushing train.

David Raymond

Investigator

Alcohol Beverage Control

8/1/2003

Special Service Award (Silver)

At 9 30 p m whi e on assignment, ABC Investigators David Raymond and Michael Houser observed a young man ask two adults males to purchase beer for him from a oca store Following the purchase, the young man entered the adults' vehicle and they drove away from the premises to transfer the beer. At one point, the minor attempted to exit he vehicle but was prevented from doing so by one of the adults, who began to choke him from behind. The vehicle fled the scene with they youth still struggling to escape and with the two ABC investigators now in pursuit. The investigators were able to initiate a vehicle stop and arrest the two adults for kidnapping, providing alcohol to a minor, attempted robbery and battery. The investigators recognition of the situation and their quick response resulted in a safe re ease of the young man. No one was injured

Roberta Record

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/26/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 26, 2007, at approximately 2:30 p.m. employees of Scaled Composites, an aerospace development company at Mojave Air and Space Port, were working near two large tanks of nitrous oxide gas when one of the carbon fiber tanks exploded. CHP Sergeants Jeffrey Baird and Mark McCormack along with Officers Jack Borne, Jesse Borne, Stephen Hunsaker Byron Jobe, Jeffrey Nousch and Roberta Record responded to the scene. The toxic gas fumes and carbon fiber particles from the explosion posed a respiratory hazard. The second tank, which contained 10,000 pounds of nitrous oxide gas, was also damaged and in danger of exploding. Because of the significant hazard and seriousness of the victims' injuries, the first responders could not wait for a hazardous material team, so CHP personnel entered and rendered aid to the victims. They helped place two victims onto backboards, and carried them to a waiting life flight helicopter; two other victims were placed in ambulances and triaged at a safe zone. CHP personnel remained on site evacuating the remaining Mojave Air and Space Port employees to a safe area. Due to the heroic efforts of these men and women, three of the four victims were successfully rescued and lived.

Dean L. Reed

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/15/1990

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 8 45 p.m. Officer Reed responded to a reported accident in which a vehicle was driven into the Colorado River. Upon arriving at the scene, Officer Reed observed the driver of the submerged vehicle kneeling in the middle of the levee road screaming that his "babies were in the car." Flashing his light over the river bank he observed the top of the submerged vehicle approximately eight feet from the river bank, and two people attempting to rescue the children trapped inside. By this time Deputy Brown, Riverside County Sherriff's Office, arrived at the scene, and was preparing to enter the water. Officer Reed followed Deputy Brown into the water after notifying dispatch of the location and the number of people trapped in the vehicle. Rescue attempts were hampered by strong river currents and the motion of the unstable, submerged vehicle in the cold, dark murky waters Despite these obstacles, Deputy Brown was able to open one of the doors of the submerged vehicle; however, he soon became fatigued due to his efforts underwater At this point, Officer Reed relieved Deputy Brown during the second underwater attempt, and was able to grab hold of a child's ankle and retrieve the body of a six-year old boy Pulling the boy to the surface Officer Reed swam to shore and handed him over to a paramedic who began cardiopulmonary resuscitation while Officer Reed exited the water Officer Reed then took the boy to the ambulance and continued with cardiopulmonary resuscitation as the paramedic inserted an airway As soon as the oxygen flow began, Officer Reed returned to the river for the other child. By this time, two CDF firemen had been able to tie off the submerged vehicle with a rope and following a second rescue attempt one of the firemen was able to cut free a one-year old girl from the bindings of a child restraint seat.

Larry Reger

Fire Fighter

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

3/27/1970

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 27, 1970, Fire Fighter Larry M. Reger was part of the CDF, Pescadero Fire Station Rescue Team who responded to a request for help when three teenagers became stranded by high tides in their attempt to walk from Pescadero Beach to Pompanio Beach. Despite desperate attempts by Fire Fighter Larry Reger to reach one of the victims, a 14-year-old female was lost due to heavy surf and high times. The heavy surf and high tides slammed Fire Fighter Larry Reger against rocks and into the surf and made the rescue attempts a great risk and peril to himself. Three other Fire Fighters, in addition to Fire Fighter Larry Reger, were injured in their desperate attempts to rescue the 14-year-old female. The collective effort of the Pescadero Rescue Team saved the lives of the other two 16-year-old teenagers who were stranded on the rock cliffs

Matthew S. Reischman

Unit Forester/Division Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

12/3/2012

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 3, 2012, at approximately 7:30 p.m. Unit Forester/Division Chief Matthew S. Reischman was off-duty in his private vehicle in Grass Valley when he witnessed a head-on collision. As Chief Reischman approached the scene, he saw an SUV on its side with the engine on fire and fluid draining out. The driver was pinned under the vehicle. After checking to make sure the people in the second vehicle were all right, he assisted them to a safe location and then turned his attention to the SUV. The driver had significant head trauma and was unconscious, but breathing. Enlisting the help of two men on the scene, Chief Reischman lifted the vehicle approximately six inches to free him. The driver's legs were still pinned however so despite the spreading flames Chief Reischman kicked out the windshield and repositioned his legs. The driver was soon extricated and moved to a safe location. Shortly afterwards, the vehicle became completely engulfed in flames.

Adam Yates

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/1/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 1, 2007, California Highway Patrol Officer Scott W. Woodring and Officer Adam Yates arrived at the scene of a major injury collision involving a car that ran off US-101, struck a tree, and became entangled in the freeway perimeter fencing. The car was on fire, and the fire was rapidly approaching the passenger compartment. The driver was critically injured and pinned in the wreckage. Officer Yates began using his fire extinguisher on the intensifying fire as it entered the passenger compartment, while Officer Woodring quickly began cutting the driver's seat belt straps. Officer Yates then handed the fire extinguisher to Officer Woodring to continue spraying the fire while he attempted to pull the driver from the vehicle. When Officer Yates realized the driver's legs were entangled in the dash assembly of the vehicle, he enlisted the assistance of a witness to the accident. Working together, the three men were able to pull the trapped man from the wreckage in the nick of time just as the passenger compartment became fully engulfed in flames. As a result of their heroic rescue efforts both Officer Woodring and Officer Yates received injuries from the fire and smoke. The actions of Officers Woodring and Yates, without regard for their own safety, prevented further injuries or death to the trapped driver.

Paul Yonezawa

Officer

California Highway Patrol

11/10/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Peter Kensinger and Officer Paul Yonezawa, on November 10, 2001, performed an act of heroism at risk to their personal safety when they rescued two Sheriff Deputies from a burning patrol vehicle. At 1:40 a. m., Officers Yonezawa and Kensinger had just completed a Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol Investigation on Eastbound Compton Boulevard just west of Cookacre Street. As the officers secured the offender in their patrol car, they observed two Los Angeles County Sheriff patrol cars collide in the intersection of Atlantic Avenue and Compton Boulevard. The force of the impact caused one of the patrol vehicles to strike an overhead light pole and concrete wall, sustaining extensive damage, the officers also observed flames coming from the engine compartment. Officers Yonezawa and Kensinger arrived at the scene and observed two Sheriff Deputies unconscious inside the damaged patrol vehicle. Officer Yonezawa attempted to open the door on the driver's side, but found it was jammed due to the collision. He retrieved the fire extinguisher from his patrol vehicle and attempted to extinguish the fire, which was growing in intensity and filling the patrol vehicle with smoke. Officer Yonezawa, fearing for the deputy's life, observed his window was rolled down, reached through the window and pulled the deputy to safety. He covered the injured deputy with a blanket to prevent him from going into shock while continuing to monitor his vital signs. Officer Kensinger positioned himself on the passenger's side of the burning patrol vehicle. The door on the passenger side was also jammed and the window rolled up. As the deputy regained consciousness, he began to scream and attempted to exit the patrol vehicle. Because of the damage to the patrol vehicle and the intensity of the fire, Officer Kensinger broke the window out with his flashlight, pulling the deputy out of the patrol vehicle. Within moments after extricating both deputies from the patrol vehicle, the passenger compartment was completely engulfed in flames.

Jeff Young

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/26/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 26, 2008, a Boy Scout troop was camping in the remote Wilson Lake area of eastern Fresno County. At approximately 1:30 p.m., a fourteen-year-old member of the troop was crossing a stream when a boulder, estimated to weigh about 10 tons, rolled and trapped the boy's leg between it and another boulder. At approximately 6:00 p.m. the CAL FIRE Fresno Kings Unit Emergency Command Center received a 911 emergency call from the Boy Scout leader who had hiked over 10 miles to summon help. A request was immediately sent out for the CAL FIRE Fresno County Fire Technical Rescue Team and the Army National Guard Black Hawk Helicopter with high altitude and night vision technology. At about 11:00 p.m., the helicopter arrived in Fresno and the rescue team was informed that the military crew would have to remain with the helicopter, thus limiting the rescue attempt to only one fire department team member. CAL FIRE Fire Captain Jeff Young immediately volunteered and began assessing the rescue situation and selecting the rescue equipment he believed would be necessary for the operation and that did not exceed the weight limitations of the helicopter. He and the crew left shortly thereafter. Around midnight, the helicopter landed in the safest and closest location it could. With the assistance of two Army National Guard Helicopter crewmen, Fire Captain Young led a 45 minute hike, in the dark, through treacherously steep rocky terrain while carrying rescue equipment and using a handheld GPS unit and flashlight to reach the boy's location. After nearly three hours of rescue efforts, Fire Captain Young and the team were able to move the 10 ton boulder just far enough to free the boy's leg. Fire Captain Young and the helicopter crew then administered medial aid and carried the boy for more than an hour over the treacherous terrain and back to the helicopter for transport to the nearest trauma center. Fire Captain Young's actions, without regard for his personal safety, saved the young boy

Marcus Young

Ukiah Police Department, Officer

Other

3/7/2003

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

Sergeant Marcus Young, riding with a 17-year-old unarmed police cadet, arrived at a local Wal-Mart store to investigate the report of an adult female shoplifter who had been placed into custody. As he escorted her to his patrol car, he was approached by an individual with whom the female suspect was associated. The individual threatened officer Young and refused to comply with repeated commands from Young to remove his hands from his jacket pockets. When the individual brandished a knife, Young grabbed his hand. The individual then withdrew his right hand from his jacket pocket, holding a gun and shot Young five times -- in the face, right upper arm, left front side, and in the back. Young was bleeding profusely, with a paralyzed right arm and left hand torn apart about two inches between the index and middle fingers. After stabbing a security guard who had come to help, the assailant entered Young's patrol car, reaching for a firearm. Young, who was concerned for the well-being of others present, directed the police cadet to remove his side arm from his belt and place it in Young's left hand. Despite his injuries, Young was able to return fire, fatally striking the assailant

Daniel Yu

Officer

Department of Justice

11/1/2013

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On November 1, 2013, a lone gunman walked into Terminal 3 of the Los Angeles International airport and opened fire with a semi-automatic assault rifle, killing one TSA officer and wounding seven civilians. The initial call to Airport Police dispatch was received within 60 seconds of the shooting. Los Angeles Airport Police Sergeant Steve Zouzounis acknowledged the call and was on scene just 30 seconds later, and joined immediately by five Airport Police officers responding to the shooting: David Lalicker, Brian Lopez, Robert Pedregon, Raymond Woods and Daniel Yu.

Trying to determine possible accomplices among the hundreds of passengers, the six officers assumed a diamond shaped "active shooter formation" and advanced on the gunman. Determining the assailant was acting alone, the officers split into two groups of three and entered from opposite ends of the concourse the shooter was located. The officers confronted him and exchanged gun fire. Due to the six officer's quick and decisive actions, the shooter was neutralized and taken into custody within four minutes after the initial "shots fired" radio call. Paramedics transported the perpetrator to a local hospital where he was treated for his injuries. The actions of these officers prevented the shooter from further injuring or fatally wounding hundreds of airport personnel and travelers.

Joseph A. Zagorski

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/28/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 28, 2009, California Highway Patrol Sergeant Jack Rice, Officer William S Strom and Officer Joseph A Zagorski, saved a man's life by stopping an in-progress suicide. Officers Strom and Zagorski were the first to arrive on scene at the Cook Street overpass of the westbound lanes of Interstate 10 in Riverside County They found a distraught man who was seated on the rail of the overpass. They began speaking with the man and distracting him.

Sergeant Rice arrived and quietly approached the man from the opposite side of Officers Strom and Zagorski He waited for the right moment and when the opportunity presented itself, grabbed the man around his upper body The man violently resisted in an attempt to get away from Sergeant Rice, nearly causing both of them to fall onto the westbound lanes of I-10. Officers Strom and Zagorski ran to assist Sergeant Rice with the struggling man. Officer Zagorski quickly assessed that they needed more leverage to pull the man to safety and wrapped his left leg around the right front tire of the man's vehicle and extended his reach to attempt to pull all of them towards safety After a brief struggle, which came precariously close to all parties falling onto the freeway lanes below, the sergeant, both officers and the suicidal man were pulled and fell backwards onto the safety of the overpass area. The man was taken into custody and turned over to Riverside County Sheriff deputies The actions of Sergeant Rice and Officers Strom and Zagorski prevented major injuries or death to the distraught man

Troy Zeeman

Los Angeles Police Department, Officer

Other

2/17/2005

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On February 17, 2005, Officers Troy Zeeman and Bryan Gregson of the Los Angeles Police Department observed a known gang member who had a record of violent crime against the citizens of Los Angeles and was suspected of a drive-by shooting that killed an innocent woman. The officers attempted to take the gang member into custody which subsequently led to a foot pursuit and a gun battle. At one point, the suspect aimed his gun at Officer Zeeman and said, "You're dead." Fortunately, the bullet missed and the officers were able to return fire, wounding the suspect, which led to his capture.

Bryan Zollner

Battalion Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

12/26/1995

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 26, 1995, CDF Battalion Chief Bryan Zollner performed extraordinary acts of heroism at great personal risk to his safety and life. After returning from a call, Battalion Chief Zollner and Firefighter II Mort Allan spotted a black column of smoke. Realizing they had a fire in progress, they responded code three to the area. The only equipment the two firefighters had with them was their turnout gear and Chief Zollner's breathing apparatus. As Chief Zollner and Firefighter Allan listened to dispatch, they learned there were victims in a house. As they would be the first on the scene and unable to notify ECC, no one would know they were there. As the two firefighters reached the scene, they observed heavy smoke and fire coming from the front of the house. Chief Zollner and Firefighter Allan donned their turnout gear and headed to the rear of the house. Bystanders told them there was a child in the back bedroom. Chief Zollner dove through the bedroom window with Firefighter Allan following behind. Firefighter Allan grabbed onto Chief Zollner's pant leg in order to maintain contact with him. Both men came out gasping for air. Chief Zolner went back into the thick black smoke and reappeared requesting Firefighter Allan to get the breathing apparatus. When Firefighter Allan was returning with the breathing apparatus and a water fire extinguisher, a private citizen came around the house with a small lifeless child in his arms. Firefighter Allan instructed the man to take the child to the paramedics standing by and continued on to find Chief Zolner. Chief Zolner was face down on the ground. He told Firefighter Allan he thought there were other victims inside the house. Firefighter Allan and a volunteer Firefighter entered through the back of the house with one hose then a second line was brought in and they continued searching for other victims. No other victims were located. Chief Zollner was taken to the hospital via ambulance with Allan following. Once treated and released, Chief Zollner and Firefighter Allan went to see the child that had been rescued.

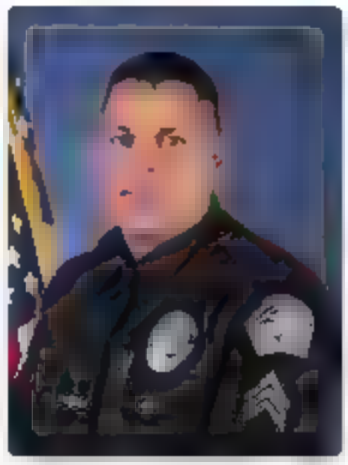
Robert Zouzounis

Sergeant

Department of Justice

11/1/2013

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor



On November 1, 2013, a lone gunman walked into Terminal 3 of the Los Angeles International airport and opened fire with a semi-automatic assault rifle, killing one TSA officer and wounding seven civilians The initial call to Airport Police dispatch was received within 60 seconds of the shooting. Los Angeles Airport Police Sergeant Steve Zouzounis acknowledged the call and was on scene just 30 seconds later, and joined immediately by five Airport Police officers responding to the shooting David Lalicker, Brian Lopez, Robert Pedregon, Raymond Woods and Daniel Yu

Trying to determine possible accomplices among the hundreds of passengers, the six officers assumed a diamond shaped "active shooter formation" and advanced on the gunman. Determining the assailant was acting alone, the officers split into two groups of three and entered from opposite ends of the concourse the shooter was located The officers confronted him and exchanged gun fire. Due to the six officer's quick and decisive actions, the shooter was neutralized and taken into custody within four minutes after the initial "shots fired" radio call Paramedics transported the perpetrator to a local hospital where he was treated for his injuries. The ssssdactsssssssions of these officers prevented the shooter from further injuring or fatally wounding hundreds of airport personnel and travelers.

John Zufall

Correctional Officer

Department of Justice

9/8/2013

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On September 8, 2013, Officer John Zufall was serving as the "Safety Diver" during an underwater recovery operation in Lake Shasta. Assuming his position at the 100 foot down mark, he monitored the progress and safety of the other diver below him. When the other diver failed to return by the prescribed time, Officer Zufall descended to a staggering depth of 172 feet and located the injured diver. Aware time was critical, Officer Zufall decided to risk the life threatening dangers of rapid ascent from such a depth in order to get the injured diver the medical care needed to save the diver's life.

Brian S. Renfrow

State Police Officer

California State Police

5/4/1991

Special Act Award (Gold)

State Po ice Officers Brian S Renfrow and Tony Spates, on May 4, 1991 performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great personal risk to their own safety and ives whi e assisting the rescue of a five-year-o d chi d trapped inside a burning, smoke-filled apartment At approximately 8:40 a.m., Officers Renfrow and Spates responded to a report of an apartment fire Upon arrival at the scene they joined officers from the LAPD who made severa unsuccessfu attempts to rescue the small child who was trapped inside an upstairs bedroom of the burning apartment. Fire equipment had not arrived at the scene and without the benefit of breathing equipment or special protective clothing normally worn by fire fighters, a four officers made their way to the second floor of the burning apartment The officers' search was impeded by tremendous heat and heavy smoke which made it difficult to see and breathe To expedite the search Sate Po ice Officer Spates continued to look in the immediate area a ong with the officers from LAPD, while State Police Officer Renfrow left the apartment in an attempt to effect an entry through an exterior window Officer Renfrow climbed up to the roof of the apartment's front porch where he and an unidentified civilian broke out a second story window. As Officer Renfrew began to craw through the window, the officers searching inside, shouted that they had discovered the child on the smo.dering mattress inside a crib. Then Officer Spates ifted the unconscious boy who was not breathing from the mattress and handed him over to one of the LAPD Officers The LAPD Officers carried him downstairs and outside where he was resuscitated through the administration of C.P R until the arrival of the Los Ange es Fire Department paramedics. Without the combined efforts of State Po ice Officers Spates and Renfrow, and Officers of the LAPD, who risked injury from fa ing debris and being overcome by smoke, the young child surely wou.d have perished in the fire.

Robert Reyna

Officer

Department of Justice

4/12/2012

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On April 12, 2012, responding to reports of shoots fired and officers down, Officer Robert Reyna, along with ten other officers of the Modesto police department, arrived on scene to find Stanislaus County Sheriff's Deputy Bob Paris and civilian locksmith Glendon Engert lying unconscious outside the front door leading to the suspect's apartment front door. Armed with an arsenal, the suspect had barricaded himself inside his apartment and exchanging fire with a second deputy, Deputy Mike Glinskas, who was pinned down and had issued the call for help. Placing ballistic shields across the front passenger window of a Modesto police car, a group of officers took cover on the driver's side and used the vehicle as mobile cover to advance on the apartment while the remaining officers deployed a flash bang diversionary device. Their coordinated efforts were successful in that they were able to extract Glinskas and escort him to safety and medical attention. They were also able to recover Paris and Engert, both of whom had unfortunately been mortally wounded.

After an eleven hour standoff, the suspect took his own life. Because of actions of Officer Reyna and his fellow officers, prevented the deadly standoff from escalating further and thereby threatening more lives.

Douglas Reynolds

Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/7/1996

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 3 50 a.m. Officer Reyno ds was returning home in his personal vehicle when he was passed by a Ford Bronco traveling at an estimated speed of 100 miles per hour. The Bronco contained three teenage males returning from a party on the beach Approximately two miles north of the location where Officer Reynolds was passed, he observed smoke and fire coming from the bottom of the northbound US 101 Liberty Canyon off-ramp Officer Reyno ds turned around at the next exit and returned to the scene Upon his arrival, Officer Reyno ds observed the Bronco on its left side and burning, approximately 100 feet from the bottom of the Liberty Canyon off-ramp Two truck drivers had a so stopped and Officer Reynolds directed them to bring fire extinguishers from their trucks Officer Reyno ds and the truck drivers were unable to extinguish the flames, which were rapid y spreading to the passenger compartment. The occupants of the Bronco were injured and could not free themselves. They were begging for help. Although Officer Reynolds was apprehensive beca se he cou d sme a strong odor of gaso ine and the fire was rapidly spreading to the passenger compartment. he decided to risk his own life to rescue the trapped men. Officer asked the truck drivers to assist him with the removal of the injured. Officer Reyno ds, with the assistance of the two drivers, managed to remove all three parties from the vehicle just moments before the interior burst into flames.

Steven Rhine

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

12/28/2016

Special Service Award (Silver)

Around midnight on December 28, 2016, a vehicle traveling on Hwy 50 left the roadway, became airborne and landed upside down quite a distance off the highway in the American River. In the vehicle was a family of four. Caltrans Equipment Operator II Steve Rhine had just gotten off duty from the Kyburz Maintenance Yard and was heading home when he noticed a group of vehicles parked off the roadway along with several people on the shoulder of the road. He turned his vehicle around to determine what had happened and to see if he could help. It was then that on-lookers told him there was a car on its roof in the river and they believed there were people trapped inside. Mr. Rhine climbed down over the snowy, icy rocks and boulders and reached the upturned car. Mr. Rhine then attempted to rescue an adult male who was in the driver's seat of the car. He was unable to free the man even with assistance from another rescuer. It was then they determined that the only option was to right the car in the water. Mr. Rhine and three other men were able to turn the car over, and free the driver. He then shined his flashlight into the car looking for any additional occupants and discovered a boy seated in the backseat underwater. Mr. Rhine worked valiantly trying to free the boy from the backseat and seatbelt, diving into the river multiple times trying to free the boy, until a swift water rescue person arrived and cut the boy free. Mr. Rhine and Caltrans Equipment Operator II Matthew McCarter took the boy to the river bank where CPR was started by Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor Shawn Morgan and a rescue person. All victims were taken to the hospital but the boy did not survive. The night this happened, although it wasn't snowing at the time, there was an accumulation of snow on the ground and the temperature was in the 20's. With no regard for his own safety, Mr. Rhine's heroic service saved three lives. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to Caltrans Equipment Operator II Steven Rhine.

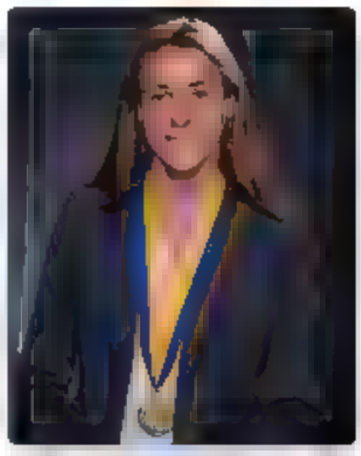
Riley Rhodes

Lifeguard I

Department of Parks and Recreation

1/21/2023

Special Act Award (Gold)



On the evening of Saturday, January 21, 2023, lifeguards Riley Rhodes and Max Hunter were 10 minutes away from clocking out for the day when they received reports of a lost swimmer off Popular Beach in Half Moon Bay. With a minus tide in full effect, the lifeguards quickly arrived on the scene and from a cliff were able to catch a glimpse of the distressed individual about 300 yards out. Donned with their wetsuits, fins and rescue buoys, the lifeguards entered the water as the light was quickly fading. For the next 20 minutes, they swam through large swells more than 8 feet high and navigated shallow sandbars, deep holes and unrelenting surf to reach the spot where they hoped they would find the victim. But as they cleared the breaking waves, they realized they had lost sight of the swimmer over the swell lines. Ensuring they stayed together, the lifeguards began to urgently call out and heard the man screaming for help moments later. Guided by the victim's cries, they finally reached him, roughly 500 yards from shore. Pummeled by waves, the lifeguards provided the victim with a floatation device. Due to the extremely hazardous conditions and darkness, the units on shore had lost sight of all parties and repeatedly attempted to call the lifeguards back. Believing that the local harbor patrol had seen them, the lifeguards tried to swim the victim to the patrol vessel since they were much closer to the boat than the beach. However, after towing for several minutes, they realized that the patrol boat had not seen them, and the vessel was moving away. During this time, a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter arrived overhead and immediately began flying a search pattern to find them with no success. Lifeguards Rhodes and Hunter ultimately decided they had to swim to shore, towing the victim in a rescue buoy in complete darkness, while navigating the increasingly dangerous conditions. After being in the water for nearly an hour while navigating large winter surfs and rip currents, the two eventually towed the exhausted survivor ashore near Redondo Beach, almost a mile from where they had first entered the water. For the other first responders on the beach, seeing the lifeguards emerge with the rescued individual was truly wondrous. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Parks and Recreation, Lifeguard I Riley Rhodes for her extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Jack Rice

California Highway Patrol Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

3/28/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 28, 2009, California Highway Patrol Sergeant Jack Rice, Officer William S. Strom and Officer Joseph A. Zagorski, saved a man's life by stopping an in-progress suicide. Officers Strom and Zagorski were the first to arrive on scene at the Cook Street overpass of the westbound lanes of Interstate 10 in Riverside County. They found a distraught man who was seated on the rail of the overpass. They began speaking with the man and distracting him.

Sergeant Rice arrived and quietly approached the man from the opposite side of Officers Strom and Zagorski. He waited for the right moment and when the opportunity presented itself, grabbed the man around his upper body. The man violently resisted in an attempt to get away from Sergeant Rice, nearly causing both of them to fall onto the westbound lanes of I-10. Officers Strom and Zagorski ran to assist Sergeant Rice with the struggling man. Officer Zagorski quickly assessed that they needed more leverage to pull the man to safety and wrapped his left leg around the right front tire of the man's vehicle and extended his reach to attempt to pull all of them towards safety. After a brief struggle, which came precariously close to all parties falling onto the freeway lanes below, the sergeant, both officers and the suicidal man were pulled and fell backwards onto the safety of the overpass area. The man was taken into custody and turned over to Riverside County Sheriff deputies. The actions of Sergeant Rice and Officers Strom and Zagorski prevented major injuries or death to the distraught man.

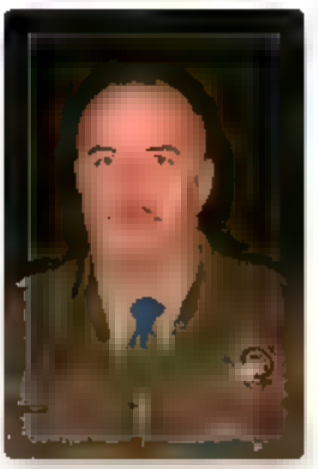
Rodney Richards

Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/24/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)



On September 24, 2009, California Highway Patrol Officers Jason Smith and Rodney Richards were on patrol in separate locations when they both responded to a call of a collision involving two big rigs near Mt. Shasta in Siskiyou County. Officer Richards arrived on scene to find one of the big rig drivers trapped inside his cab. Officer Richards was unable to open the driver's door due to the collision damage, and he noticed that fuel was leaking from the rig and flames were approaching the cab. He immediately retrieved a fire extinguisher from his patrol car and attempted to put out the flames. At this time, Officer Smith arrived on scene and immediately provided another fire extinguisher to Officer Richards who continued to keep the flames away from the leaking fuel and also put out the flames within the cab. Officer Smith then attempted to open the cab door as the driver screamed that he was on fire. Several citizens had stopped to provide assistance to the officers, but due to the damage to the cab, attempts to open the door with a pry bar and even a pickup truck's tow chain were unsuccessful. With the flames nearly out of control and beginning to engulf the entire cab, Officer Smith and a citizen tried one last time to open the door with their bare hands. With extraordinary effort, the door came free. Both Officers were then able to reach the driver, cut the seatbelt which was restraining him, and physically remove him from the cab moments before it was completely engulfed in flames. Officer Smith used his bare hands to extinguish the flames from the driver's legs. Then both Officers dragged the man away from the burning big rig. With help from the citizens, the driver was placed in the back of a pickup truck and taken to a safe place where he was then treated by emergency medical personnel. Shortly after the scene was stabilized, both Officers were transported to an area hospital where they were treated for severe smoke inhalation. Officer Smith also received treatment for burns he received to his hands. The actions of Officers Smith and Richards, without regard for their own safety, saved this man. The State of California takes great pride in presenting to Officers Rodney Richards and Jason Smith, these Gold Medals of Valor, for their extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Adam H. Ricketts

Forester I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/19/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 19 2009, on a very hot and dry Southern California day in Riverside County, a brush fire started near State Route 79 and Sage Road east of Temecula The fire spread rapidly, eventually burning over 340 acres and destroying eight homes. Firefighting conditions were extremely explosive with the temperature near 100°F, winds blowing up to 19 miles per hour and flame lengths ranging from 60 to 90 feet high CAL FIRE Copter 301 was flying a fire mission as an initial attack responding crew. On board was the pilot and CAL FIRE employees Captain Abril and Firefighters Connolly, DeLeon, Medina, Ricketts, and Santone. The crew was assigned to a hot spot in an attempt to contain the rapidly expanding fire. After landing the crew began hot spotting the fire using hand tools Shortly thereafter, the crew learned of a woman trapped in her home and surrounded by fire. Captain Abril immediately recognized he was near the location The crew frantically began looking for and soon found a barefoot 84-year old woman carrying two dogs. The woman was standing in front of a residence that was fully involved with fire and frantically told the crew she didn't know where to go or what to do The crew immediately gave the woman a canteen of water and medically assessed her. Two firefighters entered a nearby residence and retrieved a blanket and pair of shoes for her. They shielded the woman with the blanket, assessed the best escape route, and at great personal risk to the woman and themselves, passed through fire and nearly blinding smoke conditions to a safer location The actions of the crew, without regard for their personal safety, saved the life of the woman. The State of California takes great pride in presenting to Captain Frank Abril and Firefighters Eric Connolly, David DeLeon, Jose Medina, Adam Ricketts and Charles Santone, these Gold Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service

Robert Rife

CHP Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/18/1967

Special Service Award (Silver)

On October 18, 1967, CHP Officer Robert E Rife was patrolling on State Route 138 directly behind a truck-tractor being towed by another vehicle. As the towing vehicle turned southbound onto Route 15, the truck-tractor broke loose and after crossing the median, continued southbound in the northbound lanes. Officer Rife immediately pursued the driverless vehicle which by then had attained a speed of approximately 30 mph, and using his red light and siren to warn oncoming traffic, drove ahead of the driverless vehicle, passed it in the highway divider and slowed the patrol car until contact was made between the two vehicles Officer Rife said he braked to a stop with the trailer riding the rear of his unit and he heard the squealing of brakes as northbound motorists frantically changed lanes to avoid a head collision.

James M. Rissmiller

Battalion Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

10/26/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Battalion Chief's James Rissmiller and William Mason performed an act of heroism at risk to their own personal safety when they drove through active fire that was burning across the roadway to rescue a CDF engine crew of 6 individuals and two members of the news media. On October 26, 2003 fire started as three separate fires, Old Fire, Grand Prix Fire and Devore Fire that merged together in the Community of Devore, San Bernardino County Chief Mason and Rissmiller responded to a request for help from CDF engine 3575, which had become inoperable due to mechanical failure while performing structure protection duties at a home, now lay directly in the path of the fire. The trapped firefighters and media personnel had taken refuge in the garage portion of the home as parts of the main exterior of the home and the entire area around the home burned fiercely Chief's Mason and Rissmiller drove their vehicles through the fire front to the burning structure as the flames grew closer to the trapped firefighters and media personnel and picked up the four trapped individuals, three in Chief Rissmiller's vehicle and one in Chief Mason's and drove them all to safety Chief's Mason and Rissmiller's brave and heroic actions prevented not only serious injury but also possible loss of firefighter and civilian lives

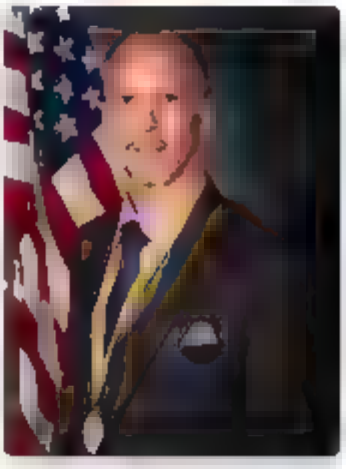
Conrad Rivarde

Manager I

Department of Motor Vehicles

3/2/2011

Special Service Award (Silver)



On March 2, 2011, at approximate y 12 15 p m , a man was causing a disturbance in the Hawthorne DMV and Manager I, Conrad Rivarde, asked him to leave Instead of leaving however, he jumped on the edge of a workstation saying, "they are going to kill me!" Mr Rivarde approached the man and demanded he get down. Although the man initially complied, within seconds he jumped back on the edge and fell backwards into the work area, got up and started running around. 911 received over 20 different calls about the man from customers within the DMV. Mr. Rivarde caught up with and grabbed the man who appeared disorientated and paranoid. The man broke free and started running towards the rear of the work area, looking behind him as if someone was chasing him He grabbed a female manager and held her in front of him like a shield and then shoved her away In an effort to apprehend the man, Mr Rivarde tackled him and they struggled on the floor. The man struck Mr. Rivarde in the face and escaped. Manager I, Kathy Myles-Daniels, intervened by grabbing the man and telling him to calm down while advising staff to clear the area Licensing Registration Examiner Geoffrey Holmes was returning back to the office after administering a driving exam and was informed about the situation taking place inside Mr Holmes ran into the building saw Ms. Myles-Daniels struggling with the man, and approached to assist with the situation. Realizing they were in close proximity to a stockroom, Ms Myles-Daniels, Mr Rivarde, Mr. Holmes and a security guard put the man inside the stockroom and together they restrained him until police arrived. The man was arrested and found to be under the influence of narcotics.

Rafael Rivera

Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/25/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of February 25, 2010, Fresno County Sheriff Deputies were attempting to serve a search warrant to a man in a residential area in the town of Minkler. As the deputies attempted to breach the main door of the residence, they came under intense gunfire from within the home, fatally wounding one of their deputies. They immediately broadcast "shots fired" over the radio. California Officer Haller, responding from the nearby town of Sanger, arrived on scene to find other law enforcement officers engaging the suspect. Officer Haller parked his patrol vehicle, took up position behind his vehicle, and also began to engage the suspect. A short time later, California Highway Patrol Officer Rivera arrived and took up a position of cover next to Officer Haller. Both were engaged with the suspect for an unknown amount of time until someone gave a "cease-fire" command. After approximately 30 minutes with no shooting, the suspect suddenly began firing from an unseen location within the residence. For fear of their safety and the safety of other officers at the scene, Officers Rivera and Haller returned fire towards the residence. During this exchange, someone yelled "officer down." Officer Rivera moved toward the location of the downed officer, found him next to a marked patrol vehicle, and attempted to extract the downed officer from the line of fire. He was initially helped by an unknown person, however, recognizing the need for assistance and the dire situation of the wounded Officer, Officer Haller stepped out from cover, directly into the line of fire and continued to engage the suspect while he moved toward Officer Rivera and the downed officer. Without regard for their personnel safety, Officers Haller and Rivera, successfully extracted the downed officer. The State of California takes great pride in presenting Officers Sean Haller and Rafael Rivera, these Gold Medals of Valor, for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Rafael Rivera

Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/25/2010

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

Officer Sean Haller and Officer Rafael Rivera of the California Highway Patrol responded to a distress call of "officer needs assistance," involving an active shooter and wounded sheriff's deputy. They arrived on the scene and immediately became involved in a gunfight, along with other allied agency and CHP officers. Officer Rivera heard someone yell "officer down" and located wounded Reedly Police Officer Javier Bejar. Officer Rivera started to extract Bejar, risking his personal safety by putting himself directly into the line of fire. Officer Haller realized that Officer Rivera needed help and increased his rifle fire toward the suspect. By increasing his "suppression fire," and placing himself in great danger, Officer Haller was able to provide the needed help for Officer Rivera to continue his extraction of Officer Bejar. Although Officer Bejar was successfully removed from the area and transported from the scene, he subsequently died from his injuries.

John Robbins

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/18/1984

Special Act Award (Gold)

Fire Captains John Robbins, Dave Harden and Dan Ward, on July 18, 1984, performed extraordinary acts of heroism at great risk to their own personal safety and lives while rescuing a volunteer fireman who had fallen down a 35-foot embankment into an uncovered mine shaft while fighting a wildland fire on Carson Hill in Calaveras County. At approximately 1209 hours these men responded to and emergency call that a man was in a mine shaft. Despite burning debris and rocks falling into the shaft, Captain Harden rappelled down the dark, smoke-filled shaft to the victim 50 feet below, who was clinging to a fingerhold crevice in total darkness. Although Captain Harden was able to get a line around the victim, he began to slip further down the shaft of unknown depth. Captain Harden grabbed the victim's hand and yelled for assistance. Fire Captain Robbins, wearing a headlamp, rappelled down the shaft and, after considerable effort, the two men were able to lower the victim to the bottom of the shaft. Fire Captain Ward had also joined the rescue effort and was located some 20 feet down the shaft where he could act as a communication and equipment relay. Despite extremely hazardous conditions caused by smoke and falling debris, these men protected the victim until rigging could be set up to remove the severely injured fireman, almost three hours after he had fallen into the shaft. Because of their prolonged stay in the mine shaft, Fire Captains Harden, Robbins and Ward suffered from smoke inhalation, exhaustion, stress and hypothermia, requiring medical treatment.

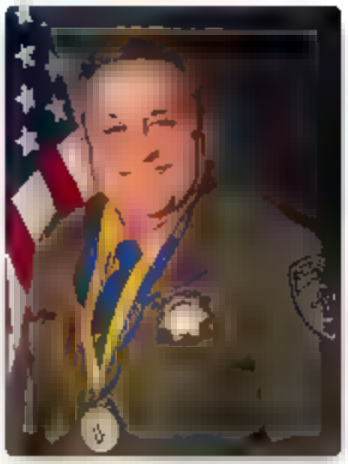
Joseph Urrea

CHP Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/14/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)



On December 14, 2009, at approximately 11:45 p.m., California Highway Patrol Officer Joseph Urrea heard about a collision on westbound Interstate 40, approximately 20 miles west of Needles. When Officer Urrea arrived on the scene minutes later, he saw three people attempting to rescue a driver trapped inside a burning vehicle. The driver's door was jammed, so Officer Urrea attempted to pull the victim out through the front passenger door, but the semiconscious driver could not unbuckle his seat belt. The engine compartment was fully engulfed, and flames were quickly spreading to the passenger side. Officer Urrea climbed into the vehicle through the front passenger door and unbuckled the driver's seat belt. With assistance, Officer Urrea pulled the victim out the driver's door window to safety. The heat and flames were so intense the victim's socks were smoldering as he was pulled from the vehicle. Less than half a minute later, the vehicle was fully engulfed in flames. The victim was transported by helicopter to the hospital and survived.

Davis D. Usrey

Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/30/1960

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 11 45 pm, Officer Usrey was riding with his partner Officer Rummel on a routine patrol duty on US 99 on the Grapevine when they observed a speeding vehicle. Officer Usrey's partner stopped the vehic e with the intention of issuing a citation. As the officer approached the vehic e, the driver pointed a pisto at Officer Rummel Instinctively, Officer Usrey acted He fired a shot through the rear window of the suspect's vehicle Simultaneously, the driver fired two shots pointb ank at Officer Rumme and Officer Rumme dropped to the pavement. Officer Usrey continued to fire, forcing the driver to take cover behind the front seat thus preventing him from continuing to fire at Officer Rummel At this point the suspect's vehicle started to roll down the grade The lights came on and the suspect's vehicle sped away. Officer Usrey assisted his wounded partner into the patro vehic e, fastened their safety belts, and started in pursuit. Officer Usrey gave chase at speeds in excess of 100 miles an hour. Officer Usrey's ability to maneuver the patrol vehicle in the traffic whi e keeping c ose enough to the fleeing vehic e so as to enable his partner to return fire, prevented any innocent victim from being invo ved. Suddenly the suspect vehicle went out of control, skidded across the roadway and struck a palm tree. Debris from the wrecked vehicle was thrown into the patrol vehicle causing Officer Usrey to ose contro The patrol vehic e ro ed over numerous times and after skidding approximately 200 feet on its top, anded upside down in the dividing strip. Both officers, somewhat dazed, scramb ed out of the patrol vehicle and began an immediate search of the wreckage of the suspect's vehicle They discovered the suspect who had received fata injuries as a result of the crash, lying face up in a nearby irrigation ditch. By this time other patrol vehicles and sheriff units arrived at the scene and Officer Usrey assisted in the care for Officer Rumme

William L. Robinson

State Park Ranger II

Department of Parks and Recreation

6/4/1983

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 4, 1983, at approximately 11 30 a m , State Park Rangers Paul G Holman and William L. Robinson responded to an emergency call that a young woman was caught in Upper Green Valley Falls at Cuyamaca State Park. The victim's foot was wedged in the boulders beneath a ten foot cascade of icy water and her head was being held above water by an injured male companion. Secured by a lifeline, Ranger Robinson plunged into the cascade, relieved the victim's friend and attempted to fasten ropes around the woman for support. Failing, he positioned himself precariously on a slippery ledge above the victim and continued to hold her head out of the water. Ranger Holman joined Ranger Robinson and stood below the woman on a small rock trying in vain to overcome the force of the water and free her trapped foot. By now the victim was experiencing difficulty breathing The rangers attempted to provide lifesaving air with a rubber hose, but the victim, suffering from the extreme cold, clamped her jaw closed Approximately 15 minutes later, a forestry crew lowered an air pack to the rangers. With the air pack securely fastened, park personnel asked for volunteers from a crowd of approximately 150 people to assist with diverting the water. A human chain formed and with the use of sandbags, the flow was lessened and the woman was removed to safety after more than an hour of being submerged in below 40 degree water Both rangers were suffering from exhaustion and shock from the cold water when the rescue was completed.

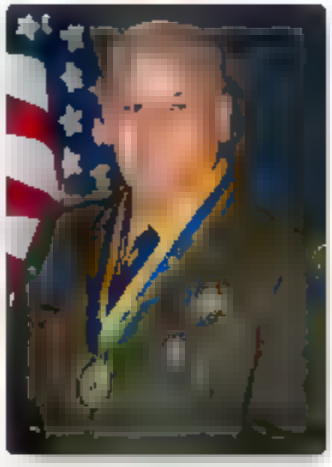
David A. Robles

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/6/2015

Special Service Award (Silver)



On December 6, 2015, at 1:33 a.m., Sergeant Robles was on patrol in the city of Santa Ana when a speeding vehicle passed him. Sergeant Robles pursued the vehicle, with the vehicle accelerating to approximately 120 miles per hour before exiting the interstate. The vehicle lost control, collided with a retaining wall and a wooden telephone pole, and immediately caught on fire. Sergeant Robles exited his patrol vehicle and approached the driver's side of the vehicle to check the welfare of the driver. Sergeant Robles observed that all of the occupants of the vehicle were unconscious and unresponsive. He attempted to open the driver's door, but could not because of the collision damage. He ran to the passenger side, but was unable to open the passenger door as well. Sergeant Robles utilized his flashlight to break the front right passenger window in an attempt to extricate the front right passenger. Before he could access the front right passenger, the fire intensified, forcing him to retrieve a fire extinguisher from his patrol vehicle. Due to the intensity of the flames, he was unable to suppress the fire with his fire extinguisher. Several local police officers arrived on scene. The additional officers utilized their fire extinguishers, but they too were unable to extinguish the flames. Sergeant Robles and a Garden Grove Police Officer moved to the driver's side door of the vehicle and extricated the driver through the window despite the intense heat and fire. Immediately thereafter, Sergeant Robles and a Garden Grove Police Corporal moved to the passenger side and extricated the front right passenger through the window. Sergeant Robles and the police officers attempted to rescue what they believed to be the one remaining passenger; however, the intensity of the heat and flames, coupled with the collision damage, limited their access to the rear occupant. Ultimately, Sergeant Robles and the officers were forced to move away from the vehicle as the flames and heat overpowered them. Once the local police officers extinguished the fire, it was discovered that there were two remaining occupants in the rear seat. One occupant had succumbed to his injuries; the other occupant survived with major injuries.

Javier Rocha

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/2/1989

Special Act Award (Gold)

Officer Javier Rocha and Officer Hugo Olazar arrived at the scene of an accident in San Francisco at approximately 10:30 p.m. on September 2, 1989. They parked their patrol car on the shoulder of a freeway off-ramp. While they waited for a tow truck, a drunk driver slammed into the rear of their car. The impact jammed all four doors and caused the patrol car to erupt into flames. Officer Olazar was knocked unconscious. Officer Rocha tried to revive him, but was unsuccessful. As the patrol car filled with smoke and flames, Officer Rocha shot out the left front window and dove to safety. After escaping, Officer Rocha braved intense heat, flames, and smoke in continued attempts to rescue his partner, but the flames became too intense and he was forced to withdraw. Despite exhaustion and second and third degree burns, Officer Rocha removed the three occupants from the other vehicle because he feared that it too would catch fire.

Richard Rodarte

Officer

Department of Justice

4/12/2012

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On Apri 12, 2012, responding to reports of shots fired and officers down, Officer Richard Rodrta, along with ten other officers of the Modesto police department, arrived on scene to find Stanislaus County Sheriff's Deputy Bob Paris and civilian locksmith Glendon Engert lying unconscious outside the front door leading to the suspect's apartment front door. Armed with an arsenal, the suspect had barricaded himself inside his apartment and was exchanging fire with a second deputy, Deputy Mike Glinskas, who was pinned down and had issued the call for help. Placing ballistic shields across the front passenger window of a Modesto police car, a group of officers took cover on the driver s side and used the vehicle as mobile cover to advance on the apartment while the remaining officers deployed a flash bang diversionary device. Their coordinated efforts were successful and they were able to extract Glinskas and escort him to safety and medical attention. They were also able to recover Paris and Engert, both of whom had unfortunately been mortally wounded. After an eleven hour standoff, the suspect took his own life The actions of Officer Rodarte and his fellow officers prevented the deadly standoff from escalating further and threatening more lives.

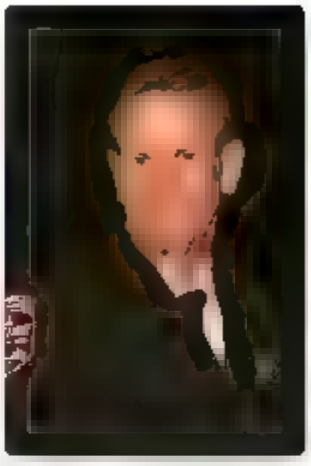
Mark Rodgers

Fire Captain Specialist

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/25/2010

Special Service Award (Silver)



On July 25th, 2010, CAL FIRE employee Rhett Imperiale was on fire prevention patrol on Highway 96 near the town of Willow Creek, when he noticed fresh skid marks on the turnout. Not seeing a vehicle, he contacted other patrol units for information on past accidents in the area. With no known past accidents, Rhett was concerned there might be a car out of sight over the edge. US Forest Service Officer Bob Phillips responded and the two descended the treacherous slope. They located a vehicle with two seriously injured victims approximately 200 feet below the roadway. The vehicle was upside down on the steep slope, leaking fuel and had one victim still trapped inside. Together they removed the victim from the vehicle, moved both victims to a safe place away from the fuel, and administered first aid until additional help arrived. CAL FIRE employees Kurt McCray, Len Nielson, and Mark Rodgers arrived on scene and scaled down the steep rocky slope to provide assistance. With the help of personnel from other law enforcement and fire agencies, it took approximately two hours to secure the victims, move them up to the highway, and transport them to medical care. The rescue was extremely hazardous due to the steepness of the slope, falling rocks, leaking fuel, and high air temperatures. Rescue personnel had to deflect numerous rocks with their hands and arms to protect the victims and other rescue personnel. The rescue team's actions, without regard for their own safety, saved these two accident victims. The State of California takes great pride in presenting Mark Rodgers, Rhett Imperiale, Kurt McCray, and Len Nielson, these Silver Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call or duty or service

Amador Rodriguez

Firefighter

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

4/15/1990

Special Act Award (Gold)

CDF Firefighters Amador Rodriguez and Louis Cannata, on April 15, 1990, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great personal risk to their own safety and life, in the attempted rescue of a one-year old girl, trapped inside a submerged vehicle, from the swift currents of a Colorado River, near Blythe, California. At approximately 8:40 p.m., Firefighters Rodriguez and Cannata arrived at the scene where rescue efforts were well underway, and observed State Traffic Officer Reed, carrying a small boy out of the swift muddy currents of the Colorado River. Rodriguez and Cannata were advised that an infant was still trapped in the vehicle. Cannata and Rodriguez, working as a team, alternated diving into the dark waters, while risking being trapped in the vehicle themselves or being swept downstream with the unstable vehicle by the strong current. Before his second dive Cannata obtained a rope from the fire engine and was able to tie off the submerged vehicle in an attempt to stabilize it. While this helped some, it did not prevent it from moving still farther downstream into deeper water. On his third dive, Rodriguez found the infant in this car seat in the back of the car, but couldn't open the seat belt. He came up and requested a seat belt cutter. On his fourth dive, he cut the belt and retrieved the child. Rodriquez handed the child off to waiting hands along the embankment, and then jumped into the ambulance and assisted in performing CPR en route to the hospital in Blythe.

Fannie Lynn Rodriguez

Custodian

Department of General Services

8/8/2018

Special Service Award (Silver)

On August 8, 2018, Department of General Services Custodian Fannie Lyn Rodriguez was walking to the State Capitol building for an evening shift when she witnessed a homeless man in a wheelchair stab another man at 11th and O Streets. Ms. Rodriguez, who is a licensed Certified Nursing Assistant, was one of several DGS employees at the scene. She rushed into action to help the victim, removing her work shirt and wrapping it around the victim's arm to staunch the bleeding until paramedics could arrive. Because the assailant had fled the scene after stabbing the victim and had not yet been captured by law enforcement, Ms. Rodriguez placed herself at risk by stopping to aid the victim. With no regard for her own safety, Ms. Rodriguez went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to Department of General Services Custodian Fannie Lyn T. Rodriguez

Jacques Rodriguez

Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/19/2002

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officers Jacques Rodriguez and Heraclio Cardenas on December 19, 2002, performed an act of heroism at risk to their own personal safety in an attempt to rescue a victim of a burning residence. Approximately 1:40 a.m. Officer Rodriguez and his partner, Officer Cardenas, were patrolling the unincorporated area of Imperial County near the City of Calexico when they overheard a scanner broadcast of a house fire within the city Officers Rodriguez and Cardenas responded to the scene to observe Calexico Police Sergeant Gonzalo Gerardo had been overcome by smoke. Sergeant Gerardo advised the CHP officers that a male adult and female child were in the residence. Smoke was billowing out of all sides of the residence and Officer Rodriguez climbed into the bedroom window while Officer Cardenas illuminated the bedroom with his flashlight. Officer Rodriguez made several attempts to pull the child, Ms. Lisa Ramirez, from the bedroom but each time she fell from his grasp. Officer Rodriguez was being overcome by smoke and had to be pulled from the burning residence, to safety, by Officer Cardenas. Fire Captain Art Navarro climbed into the bedroom with the assistance of Officers Rodriguez and Cardenas and pulled Ms. Ramirez to the window into the arms of the CHP officers. Officers Rodriguez and Cardenas helped Calexico Police Officer E. Romo carry the girl to the front yard. Officer Rodriguez bent down to allow the firefighters to step on his back to gain entry. By this time the smoke was so thick that the fire crew was unable to see the adult victim, Mr. Johnny Urena, on the floor in the bedroom. Officers Rodriguez and Cardenas illuminated the interior and directed the fire crew, by voice command to Mr. Urena's body. The fire crew handed Mr. Urena through the window to Officers Rodriguez and Cardenas, who carried him to the front yard for advanced lifesaving treatment. Although Mr. Johnny Urena and Mr. Daniel Ramirez, Sr., perished in the fire, Ms. Lisa Ramirez, Ms. Ana Ramirez, and Mr. Daniel Ramirez, Jr., was saved.

Luis F. Rodriguez

Officer

California Highway Patrol

6/6/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 6, 2020, the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office responded to a call reporting the discovery of illegal weapons and bomb-making materials in an unattended van. At approximately 2:20 p.m., Santa Cruz County Deputies Emma Ramponi and Alex Spencer, along with their Sergeant, Damon Gutzwiller, responded to the scene when they were rapidly ambushed by a subject who began shooting at them from an elevated position. Unknown to them, the subject had recently killed a federal security officer in Oakland and was part of a domestic terrorist organization. Regrettably, Sergeant Gutzwiller was struck by gunfire and suffered a fatal wound. The first allied agency to arrive in the area was the California Highway Patrol with Officers Luis Rodriguez and Michael Christopher Estey. Officer Estey drove the patrol vehicle while Officer Rodriguez navigated to the last known location of the deputies and sergeant. As the officers approached, they too were immediately met with gunfire from the subject, striking their moving patrol vehicle several times. Due to the narrow road and the steep hill on the passenger side, the CHP patrol vehicle was pressed tightly against the hillside. Officer Rodriguez could not open his passenger door, but he saw through his side-view mirror the subject carefully approaching his side of the patrol vehicle, holding a rifle. Officer Rodriguez drew his duty pistol and leaned out of the passenger window while Officer Estey positioned himself to engage the subject with his department-issued firearm, leading to an officer-involved shooting. Thanks to the heroic actions of Officers Rodriguez and Estey, the subject was wounded in the torso and elbow. He retreated from the tactical advantage, fled the scene and was later apprehended by a courageous member of the Ben Lomond community. Although their patrol vehicle was riddled with bullets, Officer Rodriguez was physically unharmed, and Officer Estey received wounds to his hands from metal fragments. Both officers exhibited astonishing courage, decisiveness, presence of mind and swift action that according to the Santa Cruz County District Attorney, saved lives. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol, Officer Luis Rodriguez for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

David Rogers

City of Los Angeles, Firefighter

Other

1/23/2003

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On January 1, 2003 at approximately 0828 hours, Apparatus Operator Rogers took one step toward his fellow Firefighter, set the chain saw down, and then took two to three steps and grabbed the fellow Firefighter by the shoulder of his turnout coat. Apparatus Operator Rogers partilly broke through the roof surfaceas pulled out the fellow firefighter back to the ridge of the roof to attempt to pull him out. Roger's was the linchpin for the rescuers, as he held onto the firefighter who had fallen through a roof. Rogers sustained serious burns to his hand, and arm and leg

Joe Rojas

Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/11/1987

Special Act Award (Gold)

Traffic Officer Joe Rojas saved a woman trapped in the back seat of a burning vehicle involved in a five-car collision in the Baldwin Park area. Gasoline, spilled from the tank of one of the vehicles, was already burning when Officer Rojas reached the scene. He used his fire extinguisher to get through the dense smoke and flames and then pulled the woman to safety just before the car was a conflagration

Joe Romeo

Los Gatos Monte Sereno Police Officer

Other

10/17/2008

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On October 17, 2008, Officers Paul and Romeo received a call that a car had left a driveway and gone backwards down a steep embankment on an isolated hillside. The older couple in the car was uninjured, but the driver, now holding the brake, was unable to leave the car without it sliding further down the hill. Officers Paul and Romeo had to first scale a locked gate and then search for the car in the dark. Footing was treacherous when the officers located the vehicle, and when the victim attempted to exit the car, it started to slide further down the hill. There was no way to brace the car, so Officer Romeo held the driver's door while Officer Paul continued pressure on the brake with his hands, exposing his body to a rollover threat, but relieving the exhausted driver. Officer Paul and Romeo held these positions for over a half hour as fire personnel worked to set up rigging to stabilize the car. When the officers themselves began to tire, they devised a plan to extricate the driver in a sudden move pulling him free. As this plan was deployed, the driver was rescued, but Officer Romeo was dragged down the hill by the now released car as he continued to hold the door for the rescue. Fortunately no one was injured in the incident.

Daniel Rosa

Deputy

Department of Justice

2/12/2013

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On February 12, 2013 a team of deputies had tracked fugitive Christopher Dorner to cabin in the snowy Angeles Oak terrain. Charged with home invasion, Dorner had spent the previous week avoiding capture and exchanging fire with law enforcement, killing on Riverside Police officer Barricaded in the cabin, Dorner shot two more deputies who'd been approaching the cabin. After witnessing Dorner shoot two more deputies who'd been approaching the cabin, deputies Musella, Lopez, and Ross shot suppressing fire to prevent Dorner from further shooting at the downed men. Musella and Ross deployed smoke canisters to conceal the downed deputies. To gain tactical advantage, Musella ran 50 yards in the open to a nearby building while Lopez and Ross rushed from cover to drag the down officers to safety Tragically one of the wounded officers succumbed to his injuries and died However, the other deputy survived and has fully recovered and returned to work.

Edward A. Rothman

Highway Engineering Technician

Department of Transportation

5/9/1971

Special Act Award (Gold)

In September of 1971, Edward A. Rothman, a 69-year-old San Diego Highway Engineering Technician, became the oldest state employee to receive California's highest award for valor. Mr. Rothman was presented the Medal of Valor for saving the life of a 10-year-old boy on May 9, 1971 who was being sucked into a three-foot drainage pipe into which water was flowing from a nearby pool. At the time of the incident, Mr. Rothman was walking with his two grandchildren when he heard screams for help from a nearby pool construction zone. Running to the scene, he found two boys attempting to help another from being drawn by the fast-moving water into the drainage pipe. Disregarding the obvious danger, he jumped in and attempted to pull the boy to safety, but the suction was too great for Mr. Rothman, a 150-pound, five-foot, seven-inch man. Buffeted by the swiftly flowing water, he nevertheless clung to the boy for more than half an hour when help finally arrived. It then took two men, straining on a garden hose looped around the boy, to pull him to safety. His own strength sapped by the ordeal, Mr. Rothman also had to be helped from the pool. Governor Ronald Reagan wrote on the official citation accompanying the Award: "his performance was an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his own safety and life, and extended far above and beyond the call of duty and service." Mr. Rothman retired from state service just short of his seventieth birthday.

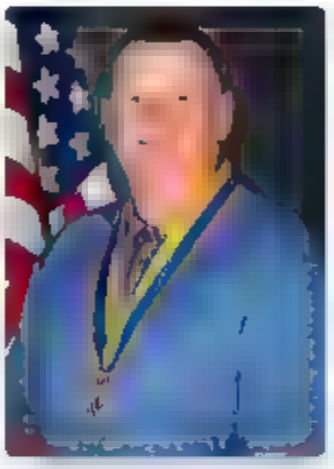
Dean G. Rouse

California Highway Maintenance Leadworker

Department of Transportation

12/20/2015

Special Service Award (Silver)



On December 20, 2015, at 10:00 a.m. Caltrans District 2 Dispatch received a call from the California Highway Patrol requesting response to a vehicle that had slid off an embankment on US 395, just past Bowman Road, and was upside down in the Pit River. As Caltrans Maintenance Leadworker Dean Rouse arrived upon the accident site, he noticed several people assisting in the rescue of the person driving the vehicle. Mr. Rouse noticed a man at the accident site holding a female passenger's hand while trying to keep her head out of the fast rising water. Risking his own life, Mr. Rouse jumped into the swift-moving, freezing river and tried to get the passenger door open to free the woman inside; however large boulders were blocking the door. A short time later, a Modoc County Sheriff Deputy arrived on scene and ran down to help Mr. Rouse in the river. The pair worked together to get the car door open. After the Sherriff's Deputy pulled the woman out, Mr. Rouse began carrying her up the steep embankment until met by paramedics. The woman suffered a heart attack while in the water, and the driver ingested a great deal of water into his lungs and was unconscious for a time. Both were sent to a nearby hospital and then airlifted to a Reno hospital, where they both recovered. Although soaking wet, Mr. Rouse stayed on scene to provide traffic control while the vehicle was pulled from the water. He went above and beyond his normal duties by staying at the scene even after the victims were rescued. Mr. Rouse returned to work for an additional three hours saying, "I was just doing my job."

Robert Routh

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

11/3/1978

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximate y 1 22 a.m., CHP officers Robert Routh and Charles Hughes were ticketing a man on the Pomona freeway shoulder near the Nogales St. off-ramp in Rowland Heights, when a car driven by a young woman was struck from behind by another car. The officers told the man they were ticketing to follow them in his car to the crash scene and he did. The car that had been hit crashed down a 15 foot embankment and burst into flames. They were able to pull the driver out from the flaming wreckage as soon as they got to the scene, however, in order to pull out the sixteen year old boy who was trapped inside, the officers and the citizen had to upright the flaming car. Both cars were burning, but the driver of the second vehicle was able to get out on her own. The young boy was reported in critical condition and the young woman was treated for second degree burns and smoke inhalation. The helpful citizen did not receive a ticket.

Brian Rubalcava

Caltrans Landscape Maintenance Worker

Department of Transportation

12/19/2021

Special Service Award (Silver)

During the night of December 19, 2021, Caltrans Landscape Maintenance Workers Brian Rubalcava and Jason Lofton were checking for rocks in the roadway, guardrail damage and downed signs following a winter storm. Around 11:30 p.m., while traveling on State Route 263, they noticed what appeared to be tire tracks leading off the roadway and stopped to investigate. Mr. Lofton saw vehicle lights down the side of the embankment and heard someone calling for help. He went over the steep embankment to investigate while Mr. Rubalcava turned on their truck's flashers and radioed dispatch. Mr. Lofton located a man in a large bush below the vehicle and a woman hanging on to the door of the vehicle, both freezing and in pain from what appeared to be major injuries. Mr. Rubalcava and Mr. Lofton removed their jackets and covered the victims in an effort to keep them warm. Among the blood, gas and debris from the wreckage, Mr. Rubalcava and Mr. Lofton provided aid to the victims until emergency personnel arrived. Mr. Rubalcava then began removing brush, loose rocks and material so emergency crews could maneuver down the embankment. Due to extremely cold temperatures, the remote location of the incident and serious injuries, both victims would likely not have survived had it not been for Mr. Rubalcava and Mr. Lofton's situational awareness, attentiveness and selfless actions performed at personal risk to their safety. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation CalTrans Landscape Maintenance Worker Brian Rubalcava for his act of heroism extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Robert Rubalcava

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

12/8/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of December 8, 2020, Fire Captain Robert Rubalcava responded to a house fire in Indio. As the fire intensified, conditions quickly deteriorated and all firefighters were ordered to evacuate the building. During the retreat, there was a partial roof collapse and other fire conditions that separated the firefighters from each other and the hose line. Captain Rubalcava realized that one firefighter was still unaccounted for and made his way to the front of the building to assist in the rescue. Although there were extreme fire conditions, Captain Rubalcava entered the building to find the missing firefighter. Extreme temperatures initially pushed him back outside, but he re-entered the building where he found the missing firefighter in the den. As the fire continued to rage, Captain Rubalcava noted a flashover fire event was just moments away. He shielded the firefighter with his body and personal protective equipment. Captain Rubalcava then dragged the firefighter to the front door where others assisted in reviving the firefighter. The firefighter was transported to a nearby burn center. With no regard for his own safety, Fire Captain Rubalcava went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Robert Rubalcava.

Benton L. Ruff

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/23/1961

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 12:30 am, Officer Benton L. Ruff and Officer G. M. Abbott, while on regular patrol, stopped a truck on the southbound side of US Highway 99 near Newhall. While talking with the driver of the truck, the officers heard a woman calling from the northbound side of the highway. As she crossed the highway divider, she fell in the roadway and lay in front of oncoming traffic. Officer Ruff reacted instantly. With complete disregard for his personal safety, he ran across the roadway in front of the oncoming traffic, literally scooped up the pedestrian, and carried her to the safety of the center divider. At the moment of the rescue, the nearest vehicle was 10 to 15 feet away and traveling at an estimated speed of 45 miles per hour.

Jack P. Rummel

Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/30/1960

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 30, 1960, at approximately 11 45 pm, Officer Rumme and his partner Officer Usrey were on routine patro duty of US 99 on the Grapevine when they observed a speeding vehicle. Officer Rummel stopped the automobile with the intention of issuing a citation for excessive speed. Officer Rumme approached the vehicle and informed the driver of this vio ation At this point, the driver fired two shots point b ank at Officer Rummel Instantly Officer Rumme dropped to the pavement, service revolver in his hand Realizing that he had been shot and might pass out, Officer Rummel fired six shots into the eft front door of the suspect's vehicle Simultaneously , his partner Officer Usrey, drew his revolver and fired through the rear window at the subject in the vehicle. The suspect's vehicle started to ro down the grade. The lights came on and the vehicle sped off.
A though having been shot twice and bleeding profusely, Officer Rumme insisted upon returning to the patrol car and continuing pursuit Officer Rummel's partner he ped him into the patrol car. They fastened their safety belts and started in pursuit, the speeds of which at times exceeded 100 miles an hour During pursuit, Officer Rummel continued to return fire at the suspect's vehicle Suddenly the suspect's vehicle went out of control, skidded across the roadway, and struck a palm tree Debris from the wrecked vehicle was thrown into the patrol vehicle causing Officer Usrey to lose contro The patrol vehic e ro ed over numerous times and after skidding approximately 200 feet on its top, landed upside down in the dividing strip Both officers, somewhat dazed, scramb.ed out of the patrol vehic e and began an immediate search of the wreckage of the suspect's vehicle. They discovered the suspect who had received fatal injuries as a result of the crash, lying face up in a nearby irrigation ditch. By this time other patrol vehicles and sheriffs' units arrived at the scene Officer Rummel was rushed to the hospital where it was discovered upon examination that the bullet had not entered his chest cavity, but had apparently struck a pen and pencil in Officer Rummel's left breast pocket, glanced off, hit the rib cage, passed around under the skin and came out under the right arm. The other bullet entered Officer Rummel's left wrist and passed through, chipping, but not breaking any bones.

Charles Russell

Caltrans Highway Maintenance Leadworker

Department of Transportation

1/10/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 10, 2007, California Department of Transportation employees Charles Russell and Wayne Moeck were driving a Caltrans tow truck going east on the Coronado Bridge in San Diego when they saw black smoke on the horizon on the south side of the bridge and decided to see what they could do to help. They arrived on the scene and found children standing in front of a house, pointing towards the fire

Noticeably absent from the scene were any other adults and the fire department. Mr. Moeck entered the smoke-filled house and called out to check if anyone was in the house.

In the meantime, Mr Russell turned on the garden hose and was spraying water on the roof

After checking several rooms in the house, Mr. Moeck spotted three disoriented figures through the smoke and led them out to safety

Without a thought for their own personal safety, Mr Moeck and Mr Russe rescued a man, woman, and a dog from a burning house, saving them from injury or death

Raymond Russell

Fire Service Training Specialist III

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/20/1986

Special Act Award (Gold)

Fire Service Training Specialist III Raymond M. Russell, on July 20, 1986 performed and extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his personal safety and life while rescuing a severely injured pilot from an approaching wild land fire at the crash site in extremely rugged territory in Chino Hills. On the above date at approximately 1930 hours Specialist Russell while out for a Sunday drive, responded to a reported wild land fire and, upon arrival, volunteered to assist in locating access to the top of the fire which resulted from the crash of a private plane. The critically injured pilot was still at the crash site. Specialist Russell, without regard to his own personal safety and placing himself in great danger proceeded down the edge of a very steep canyon through the unburned brush and aviation fuel to reach the pilot. The magnitude of the fire conditions and steepness of the terrain made that a tremendously difficult endeavor and extremely unsafe situation. Using his "fire shelter" to beat back the approaching fire Specialist Russell dragged the pilot to a "safe" area and spent more than an hour attending to him while the surrounding fire threatened them with heavy smoke, heat and fire brands. At one point Specialist Russell used his bare hands to put out the many fire brands that were landing on the victim and himself. Despite the intense heat and the possibility of being overcome by the approaching fire, Specialist Russell remained with the victim until help arrived.

Daniel Saam

Officer

California Highway Patrol

11/28/1996

Special Act Award (Gold)

On November 28, 1996, Thanksgiving Day, Officer Daniel Saam noticed a house fire while on patrol. He called dispatch and asked them to notify the fire department and then broke through an outside side gate to gain access to the home. One man had escaped but told Officer Saam that there was someone else inside the house. Officer Saam entered the house through the kitchen door and went down the hallway to a locked bedroom. The occupant was on medication for a serious ankle injury and did not hear the officer , so Officer Saam forced the door open The man resisted the officer's attempt to get him to leave as he needed his ankle brace to walk and couldn't find it in the smoky room. Realizing that time was running out, Officer Saam began pulling the man out against his will. It was a wrestling match all the way, the occupant kicking and fighting the officer's efforts By this time visibility was near zero and the house was completed filled with the smoke down to the floor. Officer Saam, coughing, gasping and struggling with his uncooperative victim in the dark, began inching his way to the exit. Just as he approached the doorway, he and the victim were pulled to safety outside by a neighbor

Jason Salas

Officer

Department of Justice

6/7/2013

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On June 7, 2013 at 11 52 a m , Santa Monica Co ege Po ice Sergeant Raymond Bottenfield, who was in p ain c othe and not wearing any body armor, was racing to Santa Monica College where a lone gunman had reportedly opened fire on students and facu ty, fatally wounding one person Further reports indicated that the gunman had earlier killed his father and o der brother, torched his home, carjacked a passing motorist and forced her to drive him to the co ege campus. Arriving on scene, Sergeant Bottenfield met with Santa Monica Police Officers Robert Sparks and Jason Sa as Learning the gunman was in the campus ibrary they rushed to the building to find the assailant firing at a group of emp oyees who were barricaded in a storage room. Despite being exposed and vu nerab e to the assailant's fire should he turn around, the three officers crossed the opened distance and commanded the shooter to drop his weapon. As the shooter turned he aimed his assault rifle at them. The officers opened fire, killing the assai ant ending his murderous rampage

Amado L. Salinas

Highway Maintenance Worker

Department of Transportation

1/17/1977

Special Act Award (Gold)

Amado Luis Salinas saved Alfredo and Angela Leon from burning, Coachella, California, January 17, 1977. In a highway accident, a two-door sedan containing Leon, 24, and his pregnant wife Angela, 20, was struck from behind by a truck, resulting in the fuel tank being ruptured and flames breaking out at the rear of the automobile. Salinas, 41, highway maintenance worker, ran to the sedan, the rear-seat section of which was filled with flames. He opened the driver's door and then aided Leon away from the automobile. Running back to the sedan, where heat was intense, Salinas extended his upper body into the front-seat section, grasped Mrs. Leon, and pulled her out of the automobile. Shortly afterward an explosive spread of flames completely engulfed the sedan.

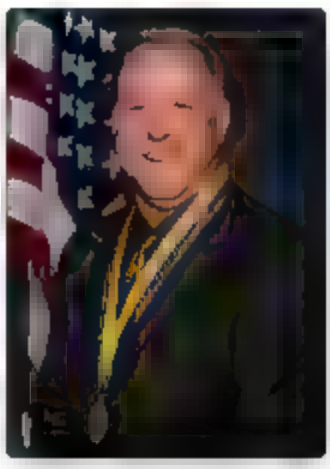
Theodore S. Sampson

Transportatin Engineer (Civil)

Department of Transportation

2/13/2017

Special Service Award (Silver)



On February 13, 2017, at 11 00 a m , Transportation Engineer Theodore 'Tad' Sampson was inspecting the Contractor's slide removal operations near Baxter on Interstate 80, approximately 70 miles east of Sacramento in the Sierra mountain region of District 3, when the operator of a Spider Excavator fell and was immediate y sucked under the excavator by a moving mass of mud, logs, and slide debris. Mr. Sampson, a ong with three other contractor personne p aced themselves in harm's way among the unstab e moving mass of slide debris to extricate the operator who was completely unresponsive with only the top of his hard hat and part of his hand visible. The victim was also pinned underneath the excavator by the stee safety cable used to tether the Spider Excavator to the slope. With the victim trapped underneath, a second Spider Excavator operator carefully adjusted the excavator's position to relieve the tension in the steel cable while Mr Sampson and two other contractor employees extricated the victim from the moving mass of mud, logs, and debris. Within minutes, these four brave men were able to free the victim from underneath the excavator and move him to a safe area where they were ab e to clear his airway, allowing the victim to regain consciousness and begin breathing on his own. There is no question without their immediate and heroic efforts, the victim would not have survived The victim was transported to a loca area hospital for observation with only minor injuries. With no regard for his own safety, Engineer Sampson's heroic service saved the life of a man from suffocation by mudslide The State of Ca ifornia takes great pride in presenting this Si ver Meda of Valor to Civil Transportation Engineer Theodore Sampson

Victor L. Sands

Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/16/1970

Special Act Award (Gold)

Short y after midnight, Officer Victor L. Sands quietly entered the home of a man who was shooting at local sheriff deputies and neighbors. After removing his shoes, Officer Sands entered the rear of the home and whi e the man was shooting at deputies, struck him across the back of the head with the stock of a shotgun who e simultaneously colliding with him. The man had fired 34 shots from a rifle during the evening

Darryl Sanford

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/19/2000

Special Act Award (Gold)

Ca ifornia Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Darryl Sanford, and Firefighter Will Krings, on, September 20th, 2000, performed an act of heroism at risk to their personal safety by entering a victim's home to save a civilian. Fire Captain Sanford and Firefighter Krings of Butte County, Engine 71, found an older wood frame structure surrounded by heavy fuels on three sides. Firefighter Krings attempted to save the house by laying fire hoses outside the structure (alone) allowing Fire Captain Sanford the needed time to attempt the rescue. However, this idea was soon abandoned due to forty-foot flames impinged on the structure from the east, north and south. Fire Captain Sanford instructed Firefighter Krings to disconnect the hoses and take the engine to safer ground as he entered the structure to get the resident out. Firefighter Krings made his way back to the flame-engulfed home and attempted to enter the residence to aid Fire Captain Sanford in the rescue attempt. The situation was worsening quickly and Firefighter Krings knew that it would be best not to enter the residence but instead he p secure a way for Fire Captain Sanford and the resident to escape the burning home. Firefighter Krings went around outside the burning home, found a window, and began to knock and yell for Fire Captain Sanford to exit at his location. However, the inside exit to the window in the room was thickly cloaked in smoke and heavi y littered with the resident's furnishings making escape impossible. Meanwhi e Fire Captain Sanford moved the woman into the back bedroom as the fire spread into the house front room and kitchen areas. He was unable to get the overcome victim out of the house through one small high bedroom window. As the fire began to enter and flash over the bedroom ceiling, Fire Captain Sanford had to jump for his own life out of the small window.

Firefighter Krings assisted in getting Fire Captain Sanford who had suffered moderate to serious burns out of a very dangerous situation to a safety area after he jumped through the small high bedroom window to escape the flames.

Firefighter Krings then drove away from the flame-consumed home and surrounding burning terrain to seek further medical attention for Fire Captain Sanford. Despite heroic efforts to save Bever y Brooks, the Concow resident died in the burning house. Fire Captain Sanford suffered first and second-degree burns on his hands back elbow and face. Both Fire Captain Sanford and Firefighter Krings greatly risked their lives in an attempt to save a civilian.

Daniel Santacruz

Maintenance Leadworker

Department of Transportation

5/1/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 1, 2001, at approximately 11 40 a m , Caltrans Equipment Operator II Victor Guerrero and Maintenance Leadworker Daniel Santacruz were cleaning a freeway drain on the right shoulder of the South Bound 405 freeway near Huntington Beach. Following established safety procedures, they closed the shoulder and used a shadow vehicle for protection when suddenly a vehicle hit the back of their shadow vehicle and burst into flames. Mr. Guerrero and Mr Santacruz immediately approached the burning car and saw a semi-conscious driver with severe injuries. The driver was making no attempt to escape the burning vehicle. With traffic flowing just a few feet away and the vehicle quickly becoming engulfed in flames, Mr. Guerrero and Mr. Santacruz forced the door open, moved inside the smoke-filled cabin, removed the seat belt from the driver, and pulled the person to safety Soon afterwards, fire trucks, CHP, and other first responders arrived and began treating the critically injured driver.

Charles K. Santone

Forester I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/19/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 19, 2009, on a very hot and dry Southern California day in Riverside County, a brush fire started near State Route 79 and Sage Road east of Temecula. The fire spread rapidly, eventually burning over 340 acres and destroying eight homes. Firefighting conditions were extremely explosive with the temperature near 100°F, winds blowing up to 19 miles per hour and flame lengths ranging from 60 to 90 feet high. CAL FIRE Copter 301 was flying a fire mission as an initial attack responding crew. On board was the pilot and CAL FIRE employees Captain Abril and Firefighters Connolly, DeLeon, Medina, Ricketts, and Santone. The crew was assigned to a hot spot in an attempt to contain the rapidly expanding fire. After landing, the crew began hot spotting the fire using hand tools. Shortly thereafter, the crew learned of a woman trapped in her home and surrounded by fire. Captain Abril immediately recognized he was near the location. The crew frantically began looking for and soon found a barefoot 84-year old woman carrying two dogs. The woman was standing in front of a residence that was fully involved with fire and frantically told the crew she didn't know where to go or what to do. The crew immediately gave the woman a canteen of water and medically assessed her. Two firefighters entered a nearby residence and retrieved a blanket and pair of shoes for her. They shielded the woman with the blanket, assessed the best escape route, and at great personal risk to the woman and themselves, passed through fire and nearly blinding smoke conditions to a safer location. The actions of the crew, without regard for their personal safety, saved the life of the woman. The State of California takes great pride in presenting to Captain Frank Abril and Firefighters Eric Connolly, David DeLeon, Jose Medina, Adam Ricketts and Charles Santone, these Gold Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Joe Saunders

Firefighter

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/20/2000

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Jeff Hawkins, Firefighters Joe Saunders, and Paul Carlos on, September 20, 2000, performed an act of heroism at risk to their personal safety by entering a victim's home to save a civilian At approximately 1 00 p.m., on September 19th, 2000, a wildfire started west of Concow Road, north of the Concow School and approximately 15 miles north of Oroville The fire continued to spread after burning 800 acres and scorching two residences. Shortly after 2 20 a m , on September 20th, 2000, Fire Captain Hawkins with Firefighters Joe Saunders and Paul Carlos from Engine 72 were checking two residents on Stagecoach Lane about 4 miles south of Nelson Bar Road After about 10 minutes, Captain Hawkins noticed the wind began to blow toward them and smoke was blowing over their heads and he noticed a firebrand ignited in the star thistle about 100 feet ahead of Engine 72. The firefighters pulled a hose line, but the fire grew in intensity and placed them all in danger Captain Hawkins disengaged the pump, repositioned Engine 72, noticed there were multiple spot fires ahead and behind them, and radioed for help The main fire was rapidly burning toward a home on Stagecoach Lane and Captain Hawkins became concerned for the two residents at the end of the lane because he felt they were trapped. Engine 71 drove south on Stagecoach Lane toward Engine 72 Fire Captain Sanford from Engine 71 radioed Captain Hawkins that he would go to the first house and attempt to protect it. Engine 72 had to abandon the hose line, move Engine 72 to the driveway of the first house and found the mobile home occupants Ray and Richard McCarty attempting to save their residence. Fire Captain Hawkins knew Engine 72 must evacuate the McCarty's because the smoke and fire conditions were very serious around the residence. The wildfire was rapidly approaching from the east driven by strong northeast wind Without regard for their own lives, the personnel of Engine 72 placed Ray and Richard McCarty into the cab of Engine 72, drove them through blinding smoke and flames engulfing the engine to a safer location near Stagecoach Lane and Nelson Bar Road

Jeffrey Scardine

Transportation Engineering Technician

Department of Transportation

10/6/2022

Special Service Award (Silver)

On October 6, 2022, Caltrans Transportation Engineering Technician Jeffrey Scardine and Maintenance Area Superintendent Cody Collins were performing their duties as instructors at the Caltrans Bank Scaling and Rock-Climbing Course located near Kingvale, California. At approximately 1:00 p.m., they were alerted by the Lead Instructor of an emergency involving student climber, Kevin Lassiter. Faced with an urgent need to reach Mr. Lassiter in a potentially life-threatening condition, Mr. Scardine quickly climbed the slope and assessed the state of Mr. Lassiter. He provided aid and comfort and rapidly constructed a mechanical advantage system to release the climber from the rope and transfer him to Mr. Collins' rope. Mr. Collins quickly accessed to the top of the slope to construct an independent rescue rope and rappelled to Mr. Lassiter. He transferred him to the rescue rope and safely rappelled them both to the ground while controlling the climbing equipment and keeping Mr. Lassiter in a secure position. Mr. Scardine and Mr. Collins' actions resulted in the successful and swift rescue of the climber who required immediate emergency medical care. A helicopter was called, and he was subsequently air-lifted to the hospital where he underwent successful treatment. The staff at the hospital credited the fast response time as a major reason why they were able to save Mr. Lassiter. Mr. Scardine is considered the foremost technical expert in the Caltrans climbing program who provides exceptional guidance and mentorship to students and other instructors. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation Engineering Technician Jeffrey L. Scardine for his act of heroism extending above and beyond the normal call of duty

Aaron Schaad

Correctional Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

5/24/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 24, 2017, at 10:20 a.m., in the Pelican Bay State Prison outdoor exercise yard, holding approximate y three hundred inmates, a one-on-one fight started Correctional officers responded to the fight to stop the incident. While responding staff were attempting to quell the incident, approximately 130 inmates began rushing and attacking the officers Officer Aaron Schaad witnessed an officer being overwhe med, taken to the ground, and assaulted by severa inmates Knowing the violence was an immediate threat to his life and the lives of other officers, Officer Schaad utilized several swings from his state-issued baton to stop the attack Not ong after, the inmates in front of Officer Schaad assumed a prone position and Officer Schaad turned his attention to the officer on the ground that appeared to be unconscious. Officer Schaad grabbed ahold of the officer's uniform and dragged him a few feet before the officer gained consciousness and Officer Schaad was ab.e to tell him that he needed to get up. Officer Schaad and another officer were able to get the semi-conscious officer to a nearby handba court and off the yard where staff were able to render aid Officer Schaad then returned to the yard and joined the skirmish line. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Schaad's heroic act saved the ives of fe ow officers and inmates in the face of a large prison fight. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Meda of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctiona Officer Aaron Schaad

Michael Schieffer

Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/16/1996

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 7 45 pm, Officer Scheiffer was patrolling southbound on Interstate 5 near Interstate 215, when he observed a brown Chevrolet station wagon stalled in the northbound number four lane north of Winchester Road. Officer Schieffer turned into the center divider in an attempt to position his patrol unit to run a traffic break northbound. As he was completing his turn, the stalled Chevrolet was struck by a plumbing service truck and was facing southbound, rolling backward across all the northbound lanes. The Chevrolet came to a stop on the east gravel shoulder in close proximity to the grass/shrub embankment. Officer Schieffer parked and exited his unit. As he did so, he observed a wide trail of gasoline had ignited in the traffic lanes and was approaching the rear of the Chevrolet. Almost immediately the rear portion of the Chevrolet was engulfed in flames. Officer Schieffer retrieved his patrol unit's fire extinguisher and ran to the Chevrolet. By this time the flames in and about the Chevrolet were intense on the left side from the rear bumper to the driver's door. Officer Schieffer decided his fire extinguished would be of no use on the left side. He ran to the right side and observed a semi-conscious male who appeared trapped in the front seat. Officer Schieffer noted the right front door was jammed shut from the impact of the collision and the right front widow was closed. Officer Schieffer saw flames approaching the injured victim and broke the right front window with his fire extinguisher. Officer Schieffer reached inside the passenger compartment and grabbed for the victim. As Officer Scheiffer began pulling the victim out of his vehicle's window to safety, a citizen grabbed Officer Scheiffer's waist and assisted in pulling both Officer Schieffer and the victim to safety from a now fully engulfed vehicle.

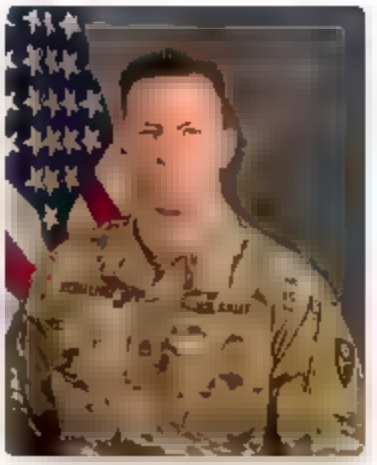
Jason Schilling

Sergeant First Class

California Military Department

10/4/2021

Special Act Award (Gold)



At approximate y 4 30 pm on October 4 2021 Oak and Mi itary Institute's security spotted an unknown person jumping the perimeter fence. At that time, the institution had nearly 60 students and adu t staff on campus participating in extracurricu ar activities The security officer notified Sergeant First Class Jason Schilling about the intruder, at which point he immediately moved to confront the individual to ensure the students and staff were safe Upon confronting the intruder, who seemed agitated and unwell, Sergeant First C ass Schi ing asked him if he was armed. The intruder responded affirmatively and disp ayed a pistol with a large extended magazine. Sergeant First Class Schi ing was unarmed and in the open, but continued speaking with the intruder ca m y whi e firm y de-esca ated the situation. Sergeant First Class Schilling convinced the intruder to unload his weapon, place it on the ground and calmly wait for the po ice to arrive. While waiting for the police to respond, Sergeant First C ass Schi ing reassured the intruder that he would be safe, coached him through his pending interaction with the police, and facilitated his surrender to the responding officers so that there was no vio ence or strugg e. With no regard for his own safety, Sergeant First Class Schilling went above and beyond the call of duty The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to the California Military Department's Sergeant First Class Jason R Schi ing

Allan Schindler

Class Title Unknown

Department of Transportation

12/30/1985

Special Service Award (Silver)

On December 30, 1985 Allan Schindler, together with another CalTrans worker, saved an unconscious man from a cabin filled with carbon monoxide produced from an unventilated generator. Mr. Schindler risked his own health and safety to help rescue the victim.

Justin Schmollinger

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

4/15/2015

Special Service Award (Silver)

On April 15, 2015 at approximately 2:30 p.m. California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Justin Schmollinger was working with his inmate fire crew in the Valley Springs area when he noticed a large black column of smoke in the distance. Captain Schmollinger loaded his crew into the bus, went to investigate, and arrived on scene to see a house in flames. He hurriedly walked around the house to examine the extent of the fire. Captain Schmollinger forced the back door open and called out to see if anyone was inside. Hearing what he thought was someone trying to yell, he entered the smoke-filled burning home and found a semi-conscious man lying on the floor in the hallway. Captain Schmollinger quickly began pulling the man to the back door, but when he was within 10 feet of the door, he was overcome by smoke. He ran out the back door briefly, got a breath of fresh air, then re-entered the burning house and pulled the man completely out. After the victim was safely outside, Captain Schmollinger requested emergency medical services and an air ambulance. Once help arrived, Captain Schmollinger transferred care of the victim to the paramedics and helped firefighters extinguish the fire. The victim was treated at the hospital for burns and smoke inhalation and released.

Paul Schori

Los Angeles Fire Department, Firefighter

Other

1/5/2006

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On January 5, 2006, the Los Angeles Police Department and Los Angeles Fire Department responded to an attempted suicide. Officers Mark Mireles and Edwin Marron approached the 6th floor balcony where they reached the woman attempting to commit suicide. As she rolled off the edge of the balcony, Officer Mireles caught her by the leg and she tried to fight him off. Losing the struggle, Officer Mireles called to his partner, Officer Marron who grabbed his leg. Firefighter Schori then arrived and secured Officer Mireles' belt, pulling the two officers and the woman to safety.

Daniel W. Schott

Fire Apparatus Engineer

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

4/25/1983

Special Act Award (Gold)

Fire Apparatus Engineer Daniel W. Schott on April 25, 1983, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his personal safety and life in rescuing four persons pinned down by rifle fire on Soboba Indian Reservation in Riverside County At approximate y 8 37 am, Engineer Schott and a crew of four were dispatched to a structure fire on the reservation, where gun fire had been reported. Engineer Schott was instructed to contact law enforcement officials on the reservation before proceeding Receiving an all clear signal, he drove approximate y 200 yards when the fire engine was struck by a bullet near the left front whee we Advising his crew to stay low, he turned the engine around. A short distance down the road, Engineer Schott observed a vehicle which had been abandoned by Rescue Squad 25 after having received several shots. Although he had the option of leaving the scene, he chose to stay and rescue the squad personnel After providing for his crew's safety, he located three of the members under the disabled vehicle and instructed them to crawl toward him using the engine as a shield. Upon learning that a fourth member of the crew was still in the back of the rescue vehicle, Engineer Schott moved the engine forward to block the rear door of the squad vehicle. Upon safely removing the last crew member, Engineer Schott immediately left the area.

Chris Schrowe

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/11/1982

Special Act Award (Gold)

On Thursday, February 11, 1982, Fire Apparatus Engineer Joel Semple and Fire Captain Chris Schrowe responded to a water rescue in the rain-swollen Santa Ana River at Norco. On arrival they found two teenagers stranded on a sand bar in the middle of the river. Justin Dean and Jeff Cruisenberry, both 17, were going hunting and had attempted to cross the river in their four-wheel drive vehicle. They abandoned the pick up when the water reached window level. Engineer Semple and Captain Schrowe were able to get a rescue line across the river to the victims and Engineer Semple crossed the river to secure the line. Cruisenberry was able to cross to safety with coaching from Semple and Schrowe. Dean then attempted to cross using the rescue line but, about halfway across, he began to lose hold and could not go any further. Engineer Semple and Captain Schrowe, at considerable risk, were able to make their way to Dean's location and assist him to safety. Engineer Joel Semple and Fire Captain Chris Schrowe risked their lives to save the two stranded teenagers who, without doubt, would have perished were not for their heroic efforts

Erich Schwab

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/26/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 26, 2018, during the Carr Fire, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Battalion Chief Erich Schwab was acting as helicopter coordinator. Flying along with him in the helicopter was California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Byron Vance, helicopter coordinator trainee. They responded to a radio report from Bulldozer Operator Don Smith advising that he was cut off by fire. Chief Schwab directed a series of coordinated water drops by multiple helicopters on Operator Smith's last known location. Recognizing the severity of the situation, Chief Schwab directed his own helicopter to maneuver through extreme weather conditions until he was able to see Operator Smith's location. They maintained visual contact with the area and provided updates and direction to ground and air resources until the scene was stabilized. A short time later, Chief Schwab and Captain Vance noted deteriorating weather conditions, increased fire activity and a large vortex of smoke and flame. In an effort to support evacuations already in progress, Chief Schwab directed another helicopter to maintain routes of travel for the evacuees with water drops. In the course of that assignment, the helicopter reported two occupied vehicles trapped by fire at the end of a driveway near the Sacramento River. Chief Schwab ordered the helicopter to drop its bucket and land to aid the people who were trapped in their vehicles while directing his own helicopter to do the same. Upon landing, Chief Schwab told Captain Vance to make contact with one of the vehicles while the other helicopter crew assisted the occupants of the second vehicle. Captain Vance ran about a quarter mile from the helicopter landing zone to the endangered vehicle. There was an elderly couple with debilitating medical conditions inside the vehicle attempting to escape the oncoming flames. Captain Vance took control of the vehicle and drove back to the helicopter. Chief Schwab and Captain Vance helped load the couple into the helicopter and flew them to safety. Once the couple were safe at a nearby landing zone, Chief Schwab and Captain Vance returned to their assignment. With no regard for his own safety, Chief Schwab went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Battalion Chief Erich Schwab.

Carl Schwettman, Jr.

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

10/21/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 21, 2007, Fire Captain Carl Schwettmann, Jr was assisting with medical treatment to a CAL FIRE crew that had been flown to the station with severe injuries from the Harris Fire near the town of Potrero. Captain Schwettmann was told that a firefighter was missing and presumed dead Captain Schwettmann decided that he would go to the fire burn area to search for the missing firefighter He left the station and drove 1 ½ miles through intense heat and smoke to the burn area that only moments earlier was impassable due to the extreme fire Upon locating the burn site, he left his pickup, and despite intense radiant heat and heavy smoke, began a methodical search of the area, calling out for the missing firefighter. The missing firefighter, having all but given up hopes of a rescue, heard Captain Schwettmann calling his name, and despite his extreme pain, walked out from behind the cover of a rock outcropping.

He had lost his fire shelter as a result of the 50 mile per hour Santa Ana winds and had suffered severe burn injuries Captain Schwettmann assessed that the Firefighter had 2nd degree burns to his face, back and legs in excess of 20% of his body Realizing his injuries were serious and life threatening Captain Schwettmann called for a helicopter. After securing his fellow Firefighter in the helicopter, Captain Schwettmann continued his search in the area for additional personnel or civilians who might also have been injured Captain Schwettmann's heroic actions were responsible for saving the life of a fellow firefighter whose burns could have been fatal with continued exposure to the radiant heat from the fire Instead, he made a full recovery from his injuries and has returned to duty.

Daniel E. Scott

State Park Ranger

Department of Parks and Recreation

6/15/1976

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 15, 1976, during the early morning hours, Rangers Lee R. Clark, Daniel E. Scott and Keith R. Williams were preparing to dive for abalone along the rocky cliffs of the Mendocino shoreline when they heard calls for help coming from about a quarter of a mile out at sea. Three survivors of a capsized boat were clinging desperately to the overturned craft and a nearby rock as the cold waves tossed them around, draining their fast ebbing strength. Quickly getting into their wet suits, the three men dispatched Ranger Williams's brother to get help and then they started the long arduous swim. The rangers, though not trained as lifeguards and very much aware of the hazards of the rough, cold water and rocks, swam out to rescue the men. One had a severe heart condition. With concentrated effort, the three rangers systematically brought the victims to shore, using their wet suits to supply a degree of warmth to the chilled victims. On shore, the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office was waiting with ambulances to transport the victims to the hospital.

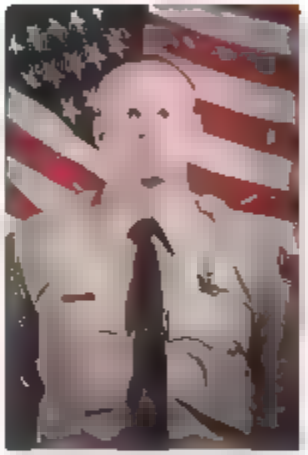
Shane Scott

Corporal

Other

8/9/2010

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor



Corpora Shane Scott of the Inyo County Sheriff's Office witnessed a fiery collision of three vehic es that occurred on U S Highway 395, south of the City of Bishop, involving a sport utility vehicle (SUV) and passenger van that were engulfed in flames, and a partia y burning third vehicle from which a female driver escaped Corporal Scott arrived on the scene and heard trapped victims screaming from the inside of the SUV, which was lying on its roof. He attempted to extinguish the flames with a fire extinguisher and saw a passenger, whose legs were on fire, desperately strugg ing to craw out of the SUV Corporal Scott entered the rear of the vehicle and grabbed the passenger. The heat was so intense that the victim's skin was pee ing off, causing Corpora Scott to momentari y ose his grip Corporal Scott then grasped the torso of the victim, pulled him from the burning vehicle and dragged him to a safe location. By this time, the SUV was fully engulfed in flames and the other passengers had perished. Corporal Scott then ran to the burning van and determined that further rescue attempts were not possible. In total, six people perished that day, three in the SUV and three in the van The female victim in the car suffered serious burns, whi e other survivors received major injuries.

Patrick Sears

Ventura Police Department, Officer

Other

1/10/2005

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On January 10, 2005, Officer Patrick "Tank" Sears of the Ventura Police Department was dispatched to the mudslides of La Conchita. He rendered immediate assistance by locating victims trapped inside collapsed homes covered by a mud wall as high as thirty feet and exposed to hazards of ruptured gas lines, downed live power lines and danger of explosion and fire.

Joel Semple

Fire Apparatus Engineer

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/11/1982

Special Act Award (Gold)

On Thursday, February 11, 1982, Fire Apparatus Engineer Joel Semple and Fire Captain Chris Schrowe responded to a water rescue in the rain-swollen Santa Ana River at Norco. On arrival they found two teenagers stranded on a sand bar in the middle of the river. Justin Dean and Jeff Cruisenberry, both 17, were going hunting and had attempted to cross the river in their four-wheel drive vehicle. They abandoned the pick up when the water reached window level. Engineer Semple and Captain Schrowe were able to get a rescue line across the river to the victims and Engineer Semple crossed the river to secure the line. Cruisenberry was able to cross to safety with coaching from Semple and Schrowe. Dean then attempted to cross using the rescue line but, about halfway across, he began to lose hold and could not go any further. Engineer Semple and Captain Schrowe, at considerable risk, were able to make their way to Dean's location and assist him to safety. Engineer Joel Semple and Fire Captain Chris Schrowe risked their lives to save the two stranded teenagers who, without doubt, would have perished were not for their heroic efforts

Felix Serpas

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/27/2016

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 27, 2016, at 2:41 a.m., Officer Felix Serpas, and his partners, Officers Kyle Bush and David Crislip, were on patrol, when they observed a car pass them at a high rate of speed. They followed the car and it suddenly veered to the right across all lanes and exited I-10 at Francisquito Avenue. The officers continued to follow and observed it fail to stop at the stop sign at the end of the off-ramp. As the car accelerated onto North Garvey Avenue, Officer Crislip initiated an enforcement stop. The car failed to yield, and continued to travel at approximately 60-70 miles per hour on North Garvey Avenue. The car turned onto Big Dalton Road and drifted to the right, striking a raised concrete curb, several trees, a water main line, and a fire hydrant. The car then spun back into the roadway and immediately caught on fire. Officer Serpas exited the patrol vehicle and ran toward the burning car as the driver exited the car and was assisted to safety by Officer Crislip. Meanwhile, Officer Crislip observed a passenger trapped on the rear right floorboard of the car. Officer Crislip reached into the car through the thick smoke and intense heat, and with great effort, removed the passenger from the car and moved her to a safe location. Officer Bush recognized the severity of the incident and retrieved the patrol vehicle's fire extinguisher to battle the growing flames. Officer Serpas and Officer Crislip then heard additional screaming and found another passenger trapped in the front seat. Officer Serpas used his knife to cut the passenger's seat belt and, with the help of Officers Crislip and Bush, again braved the heat, smoke, and flames to remove the passenger from the car. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Serpas's heroic act saved three lives from a burning vehicle. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Felix Serpas

Jose Serrano

Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

3/27/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 27, 2017, at approximately 12:45 p.m., a driver experienced dizziness, lost control of her vehicle and drove it into the All American Canal on State Route 186. As her vehicle began to sink in the strong current, she was able to free herself and enter the frigid water where she grabbed and held onto a protruding water flow meter pole. A passing motorist stopped at the scene and utilized a tow strap to pull her toward him. California Highway Patrol Officer Gilbert Caldera arrived and formed a rescue line from two 30-foot long dog leashes. He threw one end of the line to the woman and descended the concrete wall to the ledge next to her. California Highway Patrol Sergeant Jose Serrano then arrived and noticed the rescue line was untied from her. He maneuvered himself along the top of a dangerously narrow 18 inch wide concrete wall, retrieved the end of the rescue line, and lowered it to Officer Caldera. A bystander provided a life jacket which Officer Caldera managed to place on the woman despite the strong current. A ladder was also provided and lowered into the water to assist with the rescue. Due to the strong current, Officer Caldera was forced to hold onto the tow strap with one hand and the ladder with his other hand while balancing himself on the narrow ledge to keep the ladder from being swept away. With Sergeant Serrano pulling the woman from above while carefully maintaining his balance to prevent himself from falling into the swift and frigid water, they helped the woman climb up the ladder to medical aid. With no regard to his own safety, Sergeant Serrano went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Sergeant Jose Serrano

Shelby Setters

Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/25/1981

Special Act Award (Gold)

Officer Shelby Setters was assigned to the Centra Los Ange es Officer and was on y 15 minutes into her first rega ar shift when she and her partner Todd Upton spotted a flaming two-car accident on the Santa Monica Freeway Officer Upton got the unit's fire extinguisher and Officer Setters ran to the burning cars Whi e passing motorists helped the victim in one car, Officer Setters entered the other burning vehic e twice to rescue the passenger and the driver She smothered the burning clothes of one victim with her own body Officer Shelby Setters was the first woman CHP Officer to receive a Meda of Valor

Brian Shadle

Fremont Police Department, Officer

Other

11/1/2007

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On November 1, 2007, at approximately 0902 hours, Fremont Police Officers John Anderson and Brian Shadle were on a traffic stop in front of an apartment complex at 3600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Fremont, California. Citizens advised the officers of a fire at one of the apartment buildings. The officers ran into the complex and found a fully engulfed second-story apartment. They were told a person might be trapped. The officers radioed for help and then chose to attempt a rescue. Both officers forced open a locked apartment door and were faced with high heat, flames, and smoke. The officers crawled in just a few feet before being forced out. They quickly got some breathes and re-entered, finding a 40-year-old female victim about 3-5 feet inside. They grabbed her legs and dragged her out. Due to their efforts, the victim survived with burns over 40 of her body and severe smoke inhalation.

William G. Shanks

Associate Engineering Geologist

Department of Water Resources

2/8/1998

Special Act Award (Gold)

Water Resources Technician Richard " Burnett, Associate Engineering Geologist William Shanks, Associate Engineer Ernest Taylor, and Senior Engineer Kurt C Kovac, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great personal risk to their own safety in the rescue of Ms. Rachelle Anderson's two small children, Oscar and Alicia, who were trapped in an overturned car that was sinking 15 feet offshore in the storm-swollen, frigid, swift, and muddy Sacramento River On the morning of February 8, 1998, at approximately 7:55 a.m. while on special flood duty for the Department of Water Resources in the Delta, near Antioch, Mr Burnett, Mr Shanks, Mr Taylor and Mr. Kovac were flagged down by a truck driver Looking down the perilous levee embankment, they saw a car sinking into the river, its rear half still visible above the surface of the water. Mr. Burnett immediately ran down the embankment, jumped into the water and swam towards the car As soon as he reached it, he saw Oscar, the baby, still strapped in the child car sea, sinking into the water. Mr. Burnett grabbed the car seat just as Oscar's head was slipping below the surface He freed Oscar and then handed him to Mr Taylor Mr Kovac met Mr Taylor on the muddy slope of the steep embankment and took Oscar up to the road. Still trapped inside the car, three-year old Alicia was still submerged and under peril with each passing second. Mr. Shanks first and then Mr. Burnett, dove under the murky, cold water into the car through the open door on the driver's side, each attempting to rescue Alicia It was very difficult to see and the rescuers became disoriented inside the overturned car. They each tried to free Alicia from her fastened seat belt without success. Time running out, the only way to rescue Alicia was to turn the car upright. The men joined forces, trying to reposition the car upright. Incredibly, the 3,000 pound car turned easily Mr Burnett dove under the water, reached in the passenger-side door and released the unconscious child from her seat belt. Mr. Burnett and Mr. Taylor rushed to get her ashore. By this time Alicia was unconscious, extremely cold, ashen, and not breathing· her body was completely limp. Mr. Burnett and another individual took turns giving her mouth-to-mouth resuscitation Alicia finally gasped for air, coughed her throat clear of water, and started breathing Mr. Taylor and Mr Kovac wrapped Alicia in jackets and sweatshirts, and Mr. Shanks held her in the warm truck until paramedics arrived. Meanwhile, Mr. Kovac brought Ms. Anderson up the embankment to be close to her children. The State of California takes great pride in presenting these medals of valor for acts of heroism extending far and above the normal call of duty

Matthew B. Shanley

Fish and Game Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

10/15/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 15, 2003, California Department of Fish and Game Warden Matthew B. Shanley performed an act of heroism at risk to this personal safety to apprehend an armed robbery suspect. At approximately 7 45 p.m. in Loma Linda, California, an armed male suspect stole a wallet from inside a parked vehicle and fled on foot. The victim pursued the suspect and was shot at by the suspect. A California Highway Patrol (CHP) Officer was alerted by the victim of the theft and shooting. The officer pursued the suspect, who ran across the street where off-duty Fish and Game Warden Shanley was placing an order in the drive-thru lane of a restaurant. The suspect approached the driver side window of Warden Shanley's vehicle, pointed a loaded handgun to his head and ordered Warden Shanley out. Complying with the suspect's demand, Warden Shanley started to exit the vehicle. At that time, Warden Shanley saw the suspect raise and point his weapon at the CHP officer and fire what he thought to be one or two shots. Warden Shanley took this opportunity to grab the suspect s gun hand and tackle him. A struggle ensured and at one point, the suspect pointed his weapon at the stomach area of Warden Shanley. The CHP officer to discharged his weapon to end the threat to Wardens Shanley's life, and quite possible his own. The suspect later died of his wounds at Loma Linda Hospital. Although Warden Shanley was off-duty at the time of the incident, he did not hesitate in taking the first opportunity to subdue the suspect, even when doing so put his own life at extreme risk. Warden Shanley put his concern for the safety of the CHP officer, the victim, and everyone else that could have fallen victim to the armed suspect before his own. Had he not acted in such a clear, capable, and selfless manner, additional injuries and possible fatalities could have occurred.

Theodore R. Shannon

Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/15/1979

Special Act Award (Gold)

Officer Theodore R Shannon was on patro when he saw two wrecked vehic es, a GMC pickup and a Chevro et Vega. The pickup truck was on fire. Officer Shannon radioed for fire and ambulance assistance and then attempted to remove that vehicle's so e occupant F ames shot up and the officer ran for his fire extinguisher After subduing the flames, he again unsuccessfu y attempted to remove the victim. Officer Shannon spotted gaso ine pouring from the truck's dislodged gas tank The fire spread to the second vehic e which held three unconscious occupants Officer Shannon ran to the vehic e, pu ed a young girl out, and was removing a second victim when citizens offered assistance The Vega's driver was pinned in the wrecked vehicle and could not be removed Officer Shannon gave first aid to the two unconscious girls he successfully removed from the Vega and then tried again, despite the threat of explosion, to rescue both of the trapped drivers The intense heat melted the lens of his flashlight. Unfortunately, both drivers were pronounced dead at the scene and the rescued victims died later from massive injuries Officer Shannon suffered smoke inhalation and second degree facial burns.

Henry G. Shebley

Fish and Game Patrol Captain

Department of Fish and Wildlife

9/20/1958

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 20, 1958, Captain Henry Shebley was on deer patrol in the Laguna Mountains. During the evening, Captain Shebley was in his camp when he heard a muffled shot. Approximately ten minutes later, another shot was heard. He was able to get a bearing on the direction from the sound which was another campground approximately five hundred yards away. Captain Shebley was not in full uniform at the time but put on his uniform hat and sidearm and proceeded to the campground where the shooting occurred. Upon his arrival he found Lt. Gillis, a vacationing Los Angeles County Sheriff, mortally wounded and his wife attending him. The assailant was standing approximately twenty feet away from the victim and his wife and was pointing a high powered rifle at them. As Captain Shebley arrived, the assailant pointed the rifle at the captain's stomach and threatened him. The captain, displaying utmost courage, started talking to the assailant and attempted to convince him that he was an officer of the law and wanted to help him. Despite threats of harm and demands to stay away, the captain approached the assailant close enough to lunge forward, seize the rifle, and subdue him. There is a good possibility that there would have been further bloodshed had it not been for the courage and quick thinking of Captain Shebley. Another camper in the area, in fear for the safety of his wife and children, was getting into position to shoot the assailant as Captain Shebley arrived on the scene

James Sheeran

Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/18/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officers Ken Tyler and James Sheeran, on January 18, 2003, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at risk to their personal safety when they removed an unconscious driver and passenger from a burning vehicle. At approximately 2 34 a m , a 1996 Chevrolet Impala was driving at a high rate of speed on Interstate 580. The car passed Officers Tyler and Sheeran and immediately tried to avoid apprehension by exiting the freeway The driver eventually turned onto Southfront Road just west of Greenville Road in the city of Livermore and became involved in so o vehicle traffic collision The vehicle struck a signal box, which ignited a fire in the vehicle's trunk Both the driver and passanger were rendered unconscious as the fire began to spread into the passenger compartment. Officers Tyler and Sheeran observed the vehicle pass them, but eventually lost sight of it. As they continued in the potential path of the vehicle, they observed plumes of smoke and responded to investigate. Despite the vehicle fire and heavy smoke, both officers immediately ran to the driver side to render assistance. Officer Tyler extricated the unconscious driver while Officer Sheeran remained with the unconscious passenger. After removing the driver to a place of safety Officer Tyler returned to the vehicle to assist with the extrication of the passenger. As the vehicle filled with thick, heavy smoke and flames, both officers then moved the passanger from the right-front seat, across the driver compartment and out of the driver's door. Officers Tyler and Sheeran exhibited great personal courage in their efforts to save the life of another Both suffered smoke inhalation which required medical treatment

Ericson Sherwood

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/8/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

Ca ifornia Highway Patrol Officers Christopher Mode and Ericson Sherwood, on August 8, 2004, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at risk to their personal safety when they removed an incapacitated driver from a burning vehicle. At approximate y 1 32 a.m. Mr. Jordan Marques was driving his vehic e at a high rate of speed southbound on Griffith Avenue, an unincorporated road near the city of Turlock in Stanislaus County. Officers Mode and Sherwood were traveling westbound on Bradbury Road As they approached Griffith Avenue, both officers observed Mr Marques' vehic e rapid y approaching the intersection from the north Upon observing the officers, Mr Marques braked abruptly and spun out of contro coming to rest within the intersection. As Officers Mode and Sherwood initiated an enforcement stop, Mr. Marques accelerated away traveling at speeds of 80 to 100 MPH. In his attempt to traverse a rise in the roadway, Mr. Marques .ost control and his vehicle became airborne. It veered west, off the roadway edge, and plummeted down a dirt embankment. Mr Marques' vehicle came to rest after co iding with a power pole, which ignited a fire in the vehicle's engine compartment and surrounding tall, dry grass. As a result of the impact, Mr. Marques received serious injuries. His left leg was also pinned under the dashboard as the fire began to spread into the passenger compartment. Officers Mode and Ericson accessed the collision scene by driving the patrol vehicle along an adjacent dirt road. Despite the presence of dropped power lines, the vehicle fire, and heavy smoke, both officers approached the vehic e and attempted to extinguish the fire. As the fire spread to the passenger compartment, they redirected their efforts towards extricating Mr Marques who remained pinned in the vehic e and unable to climb out on his own. The officers maintained their position and worked to dislodge Mr. Marques' left leg from under the dashboard on his vehic e which was now close to becoming fully engulfed. The officers freed Mr. Marques just as the fire had spread to his position in the vehicle. They pulled him through the driver side door frame, onto the ground, and to an area of safety. During the extrication, both officers and Mr Marques were surrounded by flames, working in an area that also exposed them to the potential of being electrocuted from the dropped power lines. Officers Mode and Ericson exhibited great personal courage in their efforts to save the ife of another As a resu t of their life saving efforts, both suffered injuries that required medical treatment

David B. Shew

Battalion Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

4/27/2007

Special Service Award (Silver)

On Apri 27, 2007, CAL FIRE Battalion Chief David Shew was waiting at a traffic signa when he noticed severa vehic es s owing down. People were shouting that there was a man ready to jump off an over crossing Chief Shew turned around and saw a man cinging to the outside of the chain link fence half way across the bridge. He turned on his red lights, repositioned his vehicle against the curb, and began to wa k toward the chain linked fence. He went over to the edge of the bridge, and began to call to the man asking him what was wrong and to please come back and ta k with him Chief Shew continued talking to the victim, and the man slowly began to inch his way toward Chief Shew. Once the victim reached the edge of the fence, Chief Shew asked if it would be okay if he took a hold of his hand.

The man was sobbing as Chief Shew gently took his hand. The man repeatedly swayed backwards as Chief Shew tightened his grip on the man's wrist, and gently pu ed him back He continued talking to the man, asking him to please come back over the meta rai ing and back down to the sidewalk Finally, the man slowly stepped over the metal railing and down to the safety of the sidewalk Chief Shew's calm professionalism and skilled actions saved the man's life, and prevented a potential traffic disaster if the man had fa en

Richard Siemers, Jr.

Administrator II

Franchise Tax Board

4/15/2020

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the evening of April 15, 2020, Richard Siemers and his wife Yvette decided to take their dog for a walk to decompress and relax. Just before returning home, a passing driver stopped the couple and told them about a man who had collapsed nearby and was lying against a fence. Mr. Siemers and his wife immediately started in that direction. Upon finding the unresponsive man, the two asked a nearby neighbor to call 911 for help. Mr. Siemers noticed the man did not appear to be breathing. As a long-time cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certified employee, Mr. Siemers wasted no time and began performing CPR. He continued until emergency medical personnel arrived on scene. With the help of medical staff, the man started breathing and regained a pulse before being transported to the hospital. Over the course of the following months, the victim recovered and had necessary heart surgery. Unique to this incident, there was an unknown risk of COVID-19 and any interaction could have meant exposure to the virus. After the event, Mr. Siemers remained quarantined at home for several days. During that time, he did not miss a call or video conference, performing his important role as the Franchise Tax Board's Health and Safety Officer, always making sure everyone at the Franchise Tax Board is healthy, safe, and well. With no regard for his own safety, Mr. Siemers went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to Franchise Tax Board Administrator II Richard Siemers.

Michael Sifuentes

Firefighter I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/9/1994

Special Service Award (Silver)

When off-duty firefighter Sifuentes' vehicle broke down on Highway 30 in Highland, he left it and walked to the nearest phone to call home. Before he could speak, he heard the crash of a vehicle collision, hung up the phone and ran to the accident scene. The engine compartment of one of the cars was ablaze and flames were visible from underneath the car. Firefighter Sifuentes saw the driver unconscious inside and yelled for someone to get a fire extinguisher as he attempted to open the passenger door. It wouldn't budge, so he ran around and opened the driver's door the flames grew hotter and hotter. Firefighter Sifuentes reached into the smoke-filled vehicle for the victim, but found he couldn't move him because the seat belt was locked. He found the clasp, released the seat belt and began to pull the victim out the door. Other witnesses to the crash came and helped him carry the elderly man across the street to safety. After he made sure the victim was not experiencing any life-threatening injuries, he returned to the burning car. Someone handed him a fire extinguisher and he attempted to put the fire out until the realized the crowd was dangerously close. He ordered the people back and stopped traffic a safe distance away from the fire. When local firefighters arrived on the scene with proper equipment, the car was fully engulfed in flames. Firefighter Sifuentes continue to help direct traffic until his assistance was no longer needed.

Melinda V. Silvas

Conservationist I

California Conservation Corps

1/19/2001

Special Service Award (Silver)

On January 19, 2001, at approximately 11 30 a m , a vehic e swerved across three lanes of traffic and fishtai ed into the shoulder closure striking Mark Balsi and Lori Garley Ms Garley suffered deep cuts and a broken right eg. Mr. Balsi's injuries were far more serious His eft .eg was severed below the knee, the knuck es on his right hand were broken, and his left shou der was broken. When Ms. Silvas realized what had happened, she sprang into action and told Corpsmember LaTycia Green to call 911 She immediate y assessed the situation, began first aid, and ca ed for blankets and a trauma box. Ms. Silvas attended to Ms Garley first, and ca med her down. She then turned her attention to the more severely injured Mr Ba si When she discovered the severed leg was in the number four lane of the highway, she directed Caltrans Landscape Worker Juan Diaz and Corpsmember Michae Bu er to retrieve the limb. She gave Mr. Balsi rescue breathing, placed a tourniquet on his leg using a belt, and wrapped a blanket and her arms around him to keep him from going into shock. Ms. Silvas continued to comfort and reassure Mr Ba si by continua y telling him he was "doing awesome". She cradled his head away from the sight of the blood that was pooling underneath him. An unidentified doctor from Stanford Hospital stopped at the site to render assistance. Both Ca trans emp oyees were subsequently transported by ambulance to Stanford Hospital

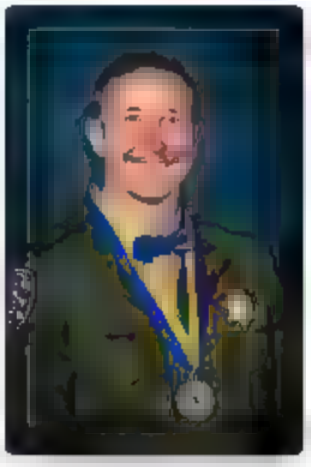
Kasey Ryan Simas

Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/7/2022

Special Service Award (Silver)



On May 7, 2022, at approximately 11:00 a.m., Sergeant William Fitzgerald arrived on the scene of a reported possible male jumper who was parked on the right shoulder of southbound Interstate 5 to the westbound State Route 91 transition road. Sergeant Fitzgerald noticed a man sitting in the passenger seat of the vehicle talking on his cell phone and asked if he needed assistance. The man advised his vehicle had broken down, but he was OK. Officers Kasey Simas and Christopher Williams then arrived on their departmental motorcycles. Sergeant Fitzgerald walked over to advise them of the situation. Meanwhile, the man exited his vehicle and stood next to the three-foot concrete barrier wall along the right shoulder, still talking on his cellphone and looking over the side. Officer Simas and Officer Williams asked him to step away from the wall, as it wasn't safe. While the officers were speaking with the man, he suddenly climbed atop the concrete barrier and attempted to take his own life by jumping off the 100-foot transition road to the freeway below. Risking their safety, the two officers and sergeant were able to grab the man, whose body was hanging over the concrete barrier. The man began to shout, "Please let me go! Please let me go!" Sergeant Fitzgerald and Officers Simas and Williams successfully rescued the man by pulling him back over the concrete barrier and onto the right shoulder of the transition road, preventing his imminent death. Sergeant Fitzgerald transported the man to a safe location off the freeway where emergency medical personnel assessed and transported him to the hospital. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Kasey Ryan Simas for his act of heroism extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Jeffrey Scott Sipes

State Park Peace Officer/Ranger

Department of Parks and Recreation

6/28/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 28, 2009, just before 10 p.m., a group of teenage friends were hanging out at the Rio Del Mar Beach in Santa Cruz County, when a large eucalyptus branch fell onto a high-voltage power line, knocking conductors and other equipment onto a grassy knoll When the teenagers heard the loud noise and saw the sparks, they thought it was someone lighting fireworks. Then one of the teenagers spotted a fire, so they went up the hillside in an attempt to put out the flames. Unknowingly, one of the teenagers, a 17-year-old boy, walked directly into a high voltage power line.
Witnesses said they saw a flash of light and the neighborhood lights went out. The boy was on the ground screaming in pain, but none of his friends could get him away from the wire because it was still charged with 12,000 volts of power. Someone called 911 Upon arriving at the scene, Mr Sipes, who is also a part-time firefighter, and another Aptos firefighter determined they could not wait for the wires to be turned off, which is the normal policy in this type of situation. They both entered the electrically charged area and each grabbed one of the boy's arms and pulled him out of the area to safety The boy was transported to a local medical center where he was listed in serious condition with second and third-degree burns to 15 percent of his body

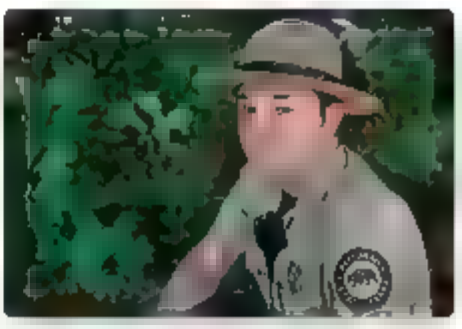
Scott Sipes

State Park Peace Officer

Department of Parks and Recreation

11/9/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)



On the morning of November 9, 2018, State Park Peace Officer Scott Sipes from the Santa Cruz District was called away from teaching at the Law Enforcement Academy at Butte College to respond to the Camp Fire in Butte County. He was partnered with State Park Peace Officer Matthew Stalter and they were directed to Feather River Hospital to assist with evacuations. However, before they could get to the hospital, the two officers stopped to help with evacuations in the area of Clark Road and Pentz Road with officers from other agencies. Traffic quickly became an issue and they helped coordinate traffic at Skyway and Pentz Roads. At this intersection, traffic became gridlocked and a large crowd formed. The fire was quickly approaching and a decision was made to move the group to the nearby shopping center to shelter in place. Officers Sipes and Stalter helped move the group and then made a final sweep on Pentz Road for evacuees. Before they could get back to the shelter area, the rapidly moving fire jumped the road, trapping the officers and the evacuees. They used the Paradise Ridge Southern Baptist Church for a shelter amidst homes engulfed in fire. Once the fire passed, Officers Sipes and Stalter relocated the evacuees and civilian vehicles to the Kmart Shopping Center on Wagstaff Road and Clark Road. The two officers then went to Feather River Hospital to evacuate and transport patients to Oroville. While evacuating two patients, they had to stop and extinguish a vehicle that was on fire. They continued to help evacuate people from the area, allowing nothing to deter them, including being nipped by a dog while trying to get people to safety. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Sipes went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Parks and Recreation State Park Peace Officer Scott Sipes

Knut Skjonberg

Lifeguard Supervisor

Department of Parks and Recreation

1/26/1969

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 26, 1969, Life Guard Supervisor Knut B. Skjonberg and Lifeguards Eric V Emery and Jerry L Bennette responded to cries from a young man who had entered the rain swollen Santa Ana River to ride an inner tube and was quickly being carried out to sea Dubbed the "worst storm in over thirty years", the river was running bank to bank with an accumulation of mud, debris, trees, rattlesnakes and even spiders, all trapped in the swirling waters. The three men, noting the peril confronting the screaming, panic stricken youth, unhesitatingly forged their way through the churning mass of murky water. Clawing their way over logs and swimming wherever possible, the three reached the youth and pulled, tugged, and towed him to safety Due to the extremely polluted water and the cuts and bruises incurred during the rescue, all had to be medically treated and inoculated against disease

John C. Sleppy

Forestry Foreman I

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/25/1969

Special Act Award (Gold)

On February 25, 1969 John C. Sleppy performed and extraordinary act of heroism, at great risk to his own safety and life, in saving the life of another. On the above date, more that thirty persons had taken refuge in the Silverado Fire Station, which was used as an emergency station due to an extremely heavy rainfall and floods in the area. An explosive sound came from the hill side immediately behind the station. Many tons of mud, rocks and trees came off of the hill, flowed through and collapsed the walls of the station, spreading almost the entire length of the building. Fire trucks were pushed through closed doors. Many persons were trapped inside and five lost their lives. In making his way to certain safety, John Sleppy observed a young boy standing between a wall and the onrushing debris. Without regard for his personal safety, he quickly changed his course and pushed the boy to safety. The delay, however, was sufficient for the debris to trap him and inflict upon him several fractures and major internal injuries. It is held to be without doubt that the boy would have been engulfed by the debris, and killed, but for the unselfish and courageous act of John Sleppy.

Jarred Slocum

Slocum

Other

8/21/2011

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On August 21, 2011 at 5 09 p m , Officer Jarred Slocum and his trainee partner along with other El Cajon Police Department patrol units were dispatched to a possible shooting ca Unbeknown to the responding officers, a suspect had shot and killed his mother-in-law and 14-month o d daughter. Upon arriving on scene, officers saw that the residence was on fire. The suspect had armed himself with a handgun and was hiding out of view on the front porch. As Officer Slocum approached the burning structure, he used the cover of vehicles in an attempt to avoid being struck by possible gunfire. The suspect then began firing his handgun and Officer Slocum was shot in the head Although seriously injured, Officer S ocum was ab e to return gunfire forcing the suspect to retreat into the residence. Officer S ocum remained composed and focused and continued to cover the suspect's residence for the safety of his fellow officers and citizens Officer Slocum was then able to remove himself from the immediate threat to an area where he could receive medical assistance. Officer S ocum's exemplary "will to survive" during this vio ent encounter a owed him to remain courageous and calm in the face of extreme danger.

Denis Smaage

Deputy Attorney General

Department of Justice

12/27/1969

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 27, 1969, Deputy Attorney General Denis D Smaage rescued four duck hunters when their boat capsized during the cold and windy predawn hours in the flooded Yolo bypass The rescue was hampered by choppy waters and high winds as well as the cold and darkness. Had it not been for Mr Smaage's calm optimism and total disregard for his own life during the four hours undoubtedly the men would have perished.

Chad W. Smith

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/27/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 6 34 a m. on August 27, 2020, a private civilian airp ane departing from Benton Airpark in Redding crashed just after takeoff Benton Airpark is the base of operation for the California Highway Patrol Northern Division Air Operations Unit. Multiple CHP personnel were inside the Air Operations office, when it was noticed that the private airp ane was attempting to take off at an unusual a titude, inconsistent with sustained flight. The airplane departed the runway complex, crossed over Placer Street and crashed into a steep, brush-filled ravine CHP personnel heard and observed a large explosion caused by the downed aircraft Officer Jonathan Wion ran from the Air Operations office towards the scene, and initially began to clear pedestrians and vehicular traffic to make way for emergency medical response personnel. Officer Chad Smith, who was off duty and on his way to the Air Operations office, approached the scene, put on his department rapid deployment vest to identify himself as a peace officer and proceeded to assist. CHP personnel were first to arrive on scene and carefully trekked down the steep embankment to the crash site, which was fully engulfed in flames There they saw the first injured victim on the ground, nearly 10 feet away from the burning fuselage. Due to the extreme heat from the burning wreckage, fue and vegetation, CHP personnel were forced to retreat on their first attempt at a rescue They decided to circle around the fuselage to approach the injured victim from a different angle While circling the aircraft, they came upon a second victim who had been thrown approximately 20 feet from the burning aircraft and was activel y on fire a ong with the surrounding vegetation. CHP personnel were able to extinguish the fire enough to move the second victim away from the fully engulfed fuse age Officer Wion then worked with Officer Smith to again move the second victim to a safer ocation, away from the flames. They began to remove the still-smo dering clothes that were clinging to the injured victim's body, then covered the victim with a b anket and provided airway support. At about this time, the aircraft's onboard oxygen tank had caught fire and caused a large secondary explosion, just 15 feet away from CHP personnel. Despite the intense heat, CHP personnel were ab e to use fire extinguishers to battle the fire on and around the first victim and pu him away from the burning aircraft and vegetation. Once the Redding Fire Department assumed fire protection, Officers Smith and Wion assisted in moving the injured parties up the steep embankment to waiting ambulances. The victims were transported to a nearby medical center for treatment of several life-threatening injuries. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Go d Meda of Valor to California Highway Patro , Officer Chad Smith for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty

Donald F. Smith

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/29/1992

Special Act Award (Gold)

Fire Captain Donald F. Smith, on September 29, 1992, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his personal safety and life. He saved the lives of thirteen ward/fire crew firefighters from Ventura Youth Conservation Camp and one local volunteer who were trapped under a burnover near Temecula. At approximately 1:00 pm, Captain Smith took his crew to assist on a backfiring operation and spread them out over the fire line. Minutes later the wind began to shift, spot fires erupted over the control line and Captain Smith told the crew to retreat to a safety island. He ordered them to toss chainsaw gasoline as far away as possible and seconds later to deploy their fire shelters. Captain Smith delayed entering his own shelter to coordinate the deployment and to visually ascertain his entire crew was safely in their shelters. Three of the men, unable to deploy their own shelters, got in shelters with others seconds before a wall of flame engulfed them from all sides. Captain Smith was the last to enter his shelter and during the fifteen minute burnover constantly talked to all crew members by name and radioed for help. Toward the end of the incident, one ward's shelter and helmet blew off and Smith tried to talk him into joining him or someone else in a shelter. The ward said it was cooler and less smoky outside and Smith saw it was clear and checked to determine if a reverse burnover was possible. He decided it was safe and ordered the crews out of their shelters just as an engine arrived on the scene and began spraying water over them. Through Captain Smith's leadership and quick actions in the face of disaster the crew survived the burnover with only minor injuries. Captain Smith was not so lucky. He received second and third degree burns to his neck, arms and hands which required a lengthy stay at the Sherman Oaks Burn Center. If not for Captain Smith's strong leadership and control, it's very possible the crew would have panicked and been seriously injured or killed.

Jason Smith

Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/24/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 24, 2009, California Highway Patrol Officers Jason Smith and Rodney Richards were on patrol in separate locations when they both responded to a call of a collision involving two big rigs near Mt. Shasta in Siskiyou County. Officer Richards arrived on scene to find one of the big rig drivers trapped inside his cab. Officer Richards was unable to open the driver's door due to the collision damage, and he noticed that fuel was leaking from the rig and flames were approaching the cab. He immediately retrieved a fire extinguisher from his patrol car and attempted to put out the flames. At this time, Officer Smith arrived on scene and immediately provided another fire extinguisher to Officer Richards who continued to keep the flames away from the leaking fuel and also put out the flames within the cab. Officer Smith then attempted to open the cab door as the driver screamed that he was on fire. Several citizens had stopped to provide assistance to the officers, but due to the damage to the cab, attempts to open the door with a pry bar and even a pickup truck's tow chain were unsuccessful. With the flames nearly out of control and beginning to engulf the entire cab, Officer Smith and a citizen tried one last time to open the door with their bare hands. With extraordinary effort, the door came free. Both Officers were then able to reach the driver, cut the seatbelt which was restraining him, and physically remove him from the cab moments before it was completely engulfed in flames. Officer Smith used his bare hands to extinguish the flames from the driver's legs. Then both Officers dragged the man away from the burning big rig. With help from the citizens, the driver was placed in the back of a pickup truck and taken to a safe place where he was then treated by emergency medical personnel. Shortly after the scene was stabilized, both Officers were transported to an area hospital where they were treated for severe smoke inhalation. Officer Smith also received treatment for burns he received to his hands. The actions of Officers Smith and Richards, without regard for their own safety, saved this man. The State of California takes great pride in presenting to Officers Rodney Richards and Jason Smith, these Gold Medals of Valor, for their extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Jason L. Smith

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/13/2015

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 13, 2015, at 1:47 a.m., Officer Jason Smith and his partner monitored a radio transmission from Ca ifornia Highway Patrol Dispatch of a traffic co ision with an ambulance responding on US-101 southbound in Morgan Hill. Officer Smith and his partner responded and arrived on the scene of a fatal traffic collision Officer Smith saw several civilians standing around a motionless body near a burning car He immediate y exited his vehicle and ran to check the we fare of the person outside of the burning car Officer Smith determined the person was ike y deceased, and was subsequently notified by the civilians at the scene that there was an unconscious woman inside of the car. Due to the intense heat and smoke, the bystanders at the scene had not made any attempt to rescue. Without hesitation and with no regard for his own safety, Officer Smith ran to the car and saw the woman s umped over in the front passenger seat Officer Smith broke the passenger side window and encountered thick black smoke, flames, and intense heat within the car. With the assistance of an unidentified civilian, he reached inside and pulled the woman from the burning car through the passenger side window As a resu t of this incident, the woman sustained facial fractures, liver acerations, and a fractured rib. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Smith's heroic act saved the life of an unconscious woman from a burning car. The State of Ca ifornia takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patro Officer Jason Smith

Nathan Smith

Wildlife Officer

Department of Fish and Wildlife

7/2/2019

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of July 2, 2019, Wildlife Officer Nathan Smith and his K-9 partner, Gaston, were on patrol in the Sierra National Forest when a call went out over the radio that gunshots had been fired and a Fresno County Deputy Sheriff was down. It just so happened that the location of the incident was not too far down the road from where Wildlife Officer Smith resides. Attempts to contact the deputy via radio were unsuccessful. To complicate matters, a local resident had accompanied the deputy on a ride-along. The ride-along was with a young man with special needs and someone the deputy knew as a mentor and friend. The Fresno County Sheriff's patrol helicopter responded to the scene and cautiously orbited the area. Although the helicopter located the deputy's patrol truck, they were unable to determine the whereabouts of the deputy, his ride-along or the suspect. The suspect was still at large when Wildlife Officer Smith and others arrived on scene. The officers rallied at the bottom of the narrow, unimproved, dirt road that led up to where the deputy's truck had been spotted. Wildlife Officer Smith and the other officers quickly formed a plan to conduct an emergency evacuation of the deputy and his ride-along. The other officers jumped into the bed of Wildlife Officer Smith's truck and, with Wildlife Officer Smith driving, they started up the road towards the deputy's truck. Because this was an ambush situation, Wildlife Officer Smith was forced to drive the patrol truck with his head below the dashboard, occasionally looking up to see where he was going. This was slow and methodical, but Wildlife Officer Smith had no choice and all of the officers were exposed to potential gunfire. As Wildlife Officer Smith cautiously navigated his way up the road, the team finally spotted the patrol truck. The deputy and his ride-along had been pinned down under the patrol truck since coming under fire. Under the constant threat of being ambushed, Wildlife Officer Smith provided rifle coverage while the other officers hastily evacuated the deputy and his ride-along from under the deputy's truck. Wildlife Officer Smith then backed cautiously down the narrow road to relative safety. The deputy was airlifted to a local hospital in critical condition. He underwent surgery for his wounds and continues to recover. The ride-along was not injured in the incident. With no regard for his own safety, Wildlife Officer Smith went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Fish and Wildlife Officer Nathan Smith

Roger Smith

CHP Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/2/2008

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On Tuesday December 2, 2008, CHP Officer Roger Smith responded to a domestic violence call to provide backup to Tehama County Sheriff's Deputies and another CHP officer already on the scene. Officer Smith picked up radio traffic indicating that the other officers had come under shotgun fire from the subject, and that one of the officers was injured. While rushing to assist, Officer Smith relayed critical information to the communications center. The injured officer, wounded in the femoral artery and bleeding profusely, advised that he was still pinned down and feeling faint. Upon arrival, and realizing the urgency of the situation, Officer Smith positioned his car, rear doors open and still under fire, so as to facilitate the extraction of the injured officer. Having rescued the bleeding officer from the scene, Officer Smith drove him to awaiting medical personnel

Roger Smith

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/2/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of December 2, 2008, California Highway Patrol Officer Roger Smith was returning to his office when he heard CHP Officer David Madriga 's attempt to contact dispatch for he p Officer Madrigal had been injured by a gunshot wound to his right leg while assisting Tehama County Sheriff's Deputies with a domestic disturbance ca The gun shot had partially severed the officer's femora artery causing him to bleed profusely, and he was becoming faint. Officer Smith rea ized Officer Madriga 's calls could not be heard by dispatch and contacted him car-to-car. Officer Smith re ayed pertinent information from Officer Madriga to the Redding Communications Center as he also sped towards the scene to provide assistance.

Officer Smith approached the scene knowing Officer Madrigal was still pinned down by ive gunfire and seriously wounded. When he arrived, Officer Smith drove to a nearby ocation and spotted Officer Madriga sitting on the ground leaning against his patrol vehicle, applying pressure to his leg Officer Smith realized the urgency of the situation and quickly devised a plan. He moved his patrol car to a position adjacent to Officer Madrigal He opened both rear doors, and with assistance from a Tehama County Sheriff's Deputy, Officer Smith pulled Officer Madriga into the rear seat of the patrol car and drove to a safe area and waiting medica personnel. The actions of Officer Smith prevented further injuries or possib.e death to Officer Madriga

Roland E. Smith

Psychiatric Technician

Department of Mental Hygiene

5/26/1965

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 26, 1965, Mr. Roland E. Smith helped rescue a man from a burning helicopter in Porterville, California. The victim's helicopter was caught in a downdraft, dropped on high power lines which caused it to catch fire, and then fell to the ground near the swaying wires. The aircraft's fuel tank was ruptured, and flames spread on the outside of the plastic cabin and around a smaller fuel tank which still was intact. The pilot, a 40 year old citrus farmer, sustained a fractured back and was pinned in his seat by the control column. A retired civil service employee, ran to the opening at the side of the helicopter, but flames rising eight feet from the ground and blowing into the cabin, prevented him from reaching the victim. He ran to the front of the aircraft, where there were no flames, and tore away pieces of the broken plastic until he had made a hole two feet in diameter. When the retired employee tried to reach into the cabin he was forced back by the flames. Mr. Smith arrived with a small fire extinguisher as the citizen enlarged the hole. Through it all, Mr. Smith sprayed the flames inside the cabin, extinguishing them. Another rescuer arrived as the retired citizen reached through the hole and jerked the control column aside. The heat was intense, but Mr. Smith continued using the fire extinguisher and kept the interior free of flames. Together the two citizens pulled the pilot through the hole. Mr. Smith then aided in dragging him away from the burning helicopter. When they were 30 feet from it, the fuel tank exploded, spreading the fire. The victim was hospitalized for severe burns in addition to his injuries.

Ryan Smith

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/12/2019

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 12, 2019 at approximately 5:30 pm, California Highway Patrol Officer Robert Paul was assisting California Highway Patrol Officer Andre Moye, Jr with an enforcement stop, when the suspect retrieved a rifle, and opened fire without warning Officer Moye was struck and critically wounded With Officer Moye down, the suspect quickly turned his attention towards Officer Paul, who immediately drew his weapon and engaged the suspect Officer Paul was able to broadcast, "Officer down!" to the CHP Inland Communications Center. Riverside Area CHP units immediately responded to the scene, as did units from the Riverside Police Department and Riverside County Sheriff's Department. Officer Paul sustained multiple gunshot wounds to both legs, but continued his courageous fight from the supine position, moving himself from left to right, and keeping the suspect unsure of his location. The suspect advanced by taking cover behind vehicles. Although outmatched by the suspect's weapon, Officer Paul was able to actively engage the suspect in spite of his life-threatening injuries and to hold off the suspect until backup arrived After several minutes, California Highway Patrol Officer Ryan Smith arrived on scene and his patrol vehicle immediately began taking rounds from the suspect. Officer Smith was able to exit his patrol vehicle and return fire. While actively engaging with the suspect, Officer Smith was able to locate and assist Officer Paul Officer Smith grabbed Officer Paul's arms and pulled him out of the line of fire. Officer Smith sustained wounds to both legs, but he was able to pull Officer Paul over 100 feet to safety While Officer Smith pulled Officer Paul to safety, California Highway Patrol Officer Vince Mendoza arrived on scene and immediately engaged the suspect using a long rifle to draw fire away from Officer Smith and Officer Paul For over 12 minutes, with the assistance of allied agencies, multiple rounds were fired at the suspect, who was fatally shot During the gunfight, Riverside County Sheriff's Department Deputies were able to evacuate Officer Paul from the scene via patrol vehicle and transport him to a nearby hospital. With the help of tourniquets, applied while en route to the hospital, and exceptional medical intervention at the hospital, Officer Paul survived the shooting and is expected to make a full recovery With no regard for his own safety, Officers Mendoza Smith went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Ryan Smith

William J. Smith

Fire Apparatus Engineer

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/29/2006

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 29, 2006, at 3:00 p.m., CAL FIRE then Fire Apparatus Engineer and now Fire Captain William J Smith, Firefighter I Kelley C DeGifford and Firefighter I Jackyn D Bowes were dispatched to a vegetation fire in the vicinity of Newport and Fish Hatchery Roads in Riverside. Homes on the north end of Newport Road were threatened by the fire and there were numerous reports of a woman trapped in her home An off-duty San Bernardino Sheriff's Deputy approached the CAL FIRE Commander and identified himself as the son of the woman trapped in her home The CAL FIRE Commander told the son that an engine was on its way and to not go up to the home. The son ignored the instructions and went to the house where he found his mother. As Fire Apparatus Engineer Smith and Firefighters DeGifford and Bowes arrived at the residence, he noticed that the rapidly spreading fire had cut off their escape route He instructed the son and mother to take refuge inside the house, and the Engine Crew would shelter them with water from their hoses until the fire passed. Fire Apparatus Engineer Smith had approximately 30 seconds to get the victims inside the house and get the hoses ready before the fire hit the house.

Firefighter DeGifford sprayed along the south side of the house to protect it from the fire Firefighter Bowes and Fire Apparatus Engineer Smith attempted to spray a second hose but were unable to do so because of the extreme heat from the attic vents Fire Apparatus Engineer Smith entered the house and evacuated the occupants from the burning house and brought them to safety. Their actions saved the woman and her son's life

Daniel Snook

Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

9/10/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Sergeant Daniel Snook and Officer Michael Terry on September 10, 2001, performed acts of heroism at risk to their personal safety by rescuing an officer who had been wounded by suspect gunfire and providing cover fire to protect the lives of other law enforcement officers and citizens who were caught in the crossfire. At approximately 11 18 p m , Sergeant Snook was patrolling the area of Zinfandel Drive and International Drive, in the unincorporated County of Sacramento, when he observed a slow-moving vehicle on northbound Zinfandel Drive. The vehicle was being driven by Mr. Joseph Ferguson, a former employee of Burns International Security, who was targeting security guards currently employed by Burns International Security. He had already taken the lives of five individuals in three different locations. Sergeant Snook advised fellow Officers Martin Tapia, and Nick Salmeron of the suspect's location At that very moment, the suspect stopped his vehicle, stepped out and began firing at Sergeant Snook and Officers Tapia and Salmeron, who had just arrived on the scene. The suspect had an AK-47 assault rifle, a sawed-off shotgun, and a pistol Officer Tapia was struck once from a round fired by the suspect. Sergeant Snook continued to engage the suspect by returning fire, thus protecting Officer Tapia and civilian bystanders in the area He did this while sustaining unrelenting gunfire from the suspect and simultaneously rendering first aid to the fallen officer Officers Michael Terry and Trevor Shields then arrived on scene and began to exchange gunfire with the suspect. At this point, Officer Terry took the lead by discharging 12 rounds from his weapon, as the suspect returned to his vehicle, while continuing to shoot at the officers Sergeant Snook continued to render first aid to the fallen Officer Tapia and coordinated the units pursuing the suspect who had subsequently fled the scene. The suspect eventually came to a stop, exited his vehicle and began to shoot at the pursuing officers. Officer Terry continued to risk his life by exchanging direct gunfire with the suspect. This cover fire provided by Officer Terry was successful in diverting the suspect's attention from other law enforcement officers and bystanders, allowing for the necessary rescues and evacuations to occur. In the end, Officer Terry discharged over 60 rounds of ammunition at the suspect, while the suspect fired over 150 rounds of ammunition at him and other involved officers The suspect later re-entered his vehicle and ended his own life. Sergeant Snook and Officer Terry acted without hesitation or thought to their own personal safety in order to protect the lives of fellow officers and citizens

Timothy A. Snyder

Officer

California Highway Patrol

11/20/1999

Special Act Award (Gold)

On November 20, 1999, at approximately 1:00 a.m., Officer Douglas W. Prentiss, was on patrol with his partner, Officer Timothy A. Synder, on the westbound Ventura Freeway In Encino, California, when he received a radio call of a solo traffic collision. Upon their arrival, the officers observed a vehicle over the side of the freeway. They were advised by a motorist that a person was trapped inside the burning vehicle. Both officers exited their vehicle and proceeded towards the burning vehicle. As the officers ran down the embankment, they encountered a wall of fire engulfing the rear of the vehicle and nearby brush. Officer Snyder observed a solo female occupant unconscious in the driver's seat. He attempted to open the driver's door, but it was too badly damaged. Officer Prentiss struck the locked passenger side door window with his metal flashlight. After three attempts, he was able to shatter the window. In the process, he cut his hand, but he was able to open the door. Officer Snyder observed the driver's seat belt to be in place, so he took his pocketknife and cut through it. Officer Prentiss noted the rear passenger compartment was on fire, and smoke and fumes were quickly traveling toward the driver's area. He also noted the driver had blood on her face and pants. He attempted to extricate her from the vehicle by placing his arms around her but lost his grip due to the blood that covered his hands. Officer Synder then exchanged places with Officer Prentiss and pried the right side door open wider. Officer Prentiss, seeing the lap seat belt was still in place, cut the belt however, the victim was still pinned behind the wheel and remained unconscious. The officers could feel the flames getting closer, and although the car was filling with smoke and fumes, the officers continued in their efforts to extricate the victim. Officer Prentiss pushed the victim's lower torso while Officer Synder pulled on her upper torso. Their efforts were successful, and the victim was removed from the burning wreckage. They quickly removed her from harm's way. Within seconds, the vehicle was totally engulfed in flames. The victim was treated for her injuries and transported to the hospital.

Gregory D. Sobodash

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/21/1982

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 9 55 a.m., State Traffic Officer Gregory D Sobodash responded to a solo vehicle accident along U.S. 101. Upon arrival, Officer Sobodash found the vehicle lying upside down in a dry creek bed approximately thirty feet below the roadway Observing a fire in the engine compartment, Officer Sobodash requested fire and rescue personnel and then raced to the vehicle. Unable to gain access through the driver's door, Officer Sobodash attempted to force the passenger door open Although driven back several times by thick smoke and fumes, Officer Sobodash finally succeeded in entering the passenger compartment While a fire truck that had arrived on scene was spraying the car with water, Officer Sobodash removed two of the three victims in the vehicle. The third was trapped inside but eventually freed after the vehicle was returned to an upright position. Prior to this action, however, Officer Sobodash reentered the vehicle and utilizing a stethoscope from his EMT kit, determined that the victim had no pulse. Although suffering from smoke inhalation, Officer Sobodash assisted the paramedics in treating and stabilizing the victims. Officer Sobodash was subsequently transported to a local hospital where he was treated for smoke inhalation and released.

Charles Sorenson

Highway Patrolman

California Highway Patrol

3/15/1963

Special Act Award (Gold)

Highway Patrol Officer Charles H Sorenson took up pursuit of two young men ages 16 and 18, in a stolen car on Highway 12. The suspect's car crashed into a pole and the two fled into a backyard. Officer Sorenson followed them on foot. As the patrolman attempted to arrest the young men, the 18 year old shot and killed the Officer

Ariel Sosa

Peace Officer Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/29/2022

Special Service Award (Silver)

On June 29, 2022, at approximately 5:54 p.m. the Perris Emergency Command Center dispatched a response to a three-vehicle traffic collision with a person trapped inside one of the cars. The first arriving unit was Riverside County Sheriff's Deputy Carlos Rosado, who broadcasted that the vehicle was on fire and confirmed the driver was trapped. Deputy Rosado requested additional nearby units that were carrying fire extinguishers to respond. CAL FIRE Peace Officer Fire Captains Ariel Sosa, Tim Cabral, Kory McGranahan, John May and Joe Green heard the radio call and responded that they were on duty and assigned to their patrol nearby. Upon arrival, the officers observed that the driver was trapped, screaming, burning and bleeding. The driver needed to be pulled from the vehicle, but no one could pry open the door given the extreme conditions. Officer Green rushed to provide support by moving fire extinguishers and assisting Officers McGranahan and May. Due to the twisted metal and hidden fire between the engine and the dashboard, the fire extinguishers did not suppress the fire. Officer McGranahan climbed into the vehicle and placed himself in the fire's path to curtail the flame's growth by inserting the fire extinguisher's dry powder into gaps and cracks near the driver's lower legs. Officer May used his handheld forceable entry tools to peel open the hood and fenders to access the seat of the fire. As more fire extinguishers arrived from nearby units, both Officers McGranahan and May used them to keep the fire from growing. Officer Cabral aided Officers McGranahan and May in attempts to combat the fire. Officer Cabral pulled his ice chest full of water to temporarily suppress the fire's growth beneath the vehicle. These forward-thinking actions slowed the fire's spread, but the driver was still in harm's way. The first fire engine arrived at approximately 6:02 p.m. Still facing the active burning fire without any fire-suppressing agent left, Officers Sosa and Cabral pulled the hose from the fire engine while the firefighters suited up in additional safety gear. Thankfully, Officers Sosa and Cabral extinguished the fire. Additional fire engines arrived and cut the driver out of the vehicle. The driver was flown by air ambulance to the nearest local trauma and burn center. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Peace Officer Fire Captain Ariel Sosa for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty

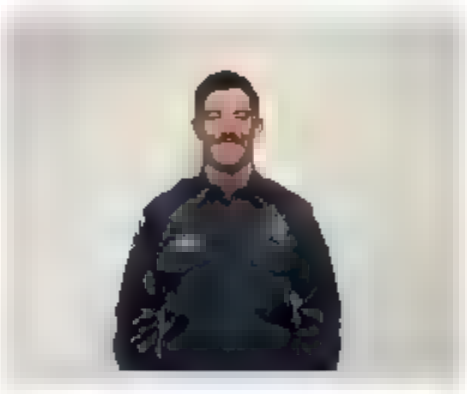
Cory Souza

Firefighter

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

8/18/2021

Special Service Award (Silver)



Around noon on August 18, 2021, the Cache Fire ignited on the east side of Clearlake, in the Dam Road area. The area faced a difficult fire season that year, and weather for the day showed Red Flag conditions with high temperatures, low humidity, and winds between 10-20 miles per hour. By 1:00 p.m., while Department of Forestry and Fire Protection fire fighters were working to evacuate one of two trailer parks, the fire made a rapid push south into the trailer park, trapping fire fighters and residents. The access road had become blocked. Firefighters worked with a tractor operator to break through a fence to allow trapped individuals a way to escape. Once the fire crew established a way out, a woman was spotted engulfed in flames, coming from the area of the trailer park where other individuals had just fled. CalFIRE Fire Apparatus Engineer Martin Newman, with Firefighters Cory Souza and Jared Gotro, ran back into the fire. With the help of Firefighters Souza and Gotro, Mr. Newman hoisted the victim onto his shoulder and ran 100 feet to safety. The victim would eventually receive treatment at the UC Davis Burn Center. With no regard for his own safety, Mr Souza went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Firefighter Cory Souza.

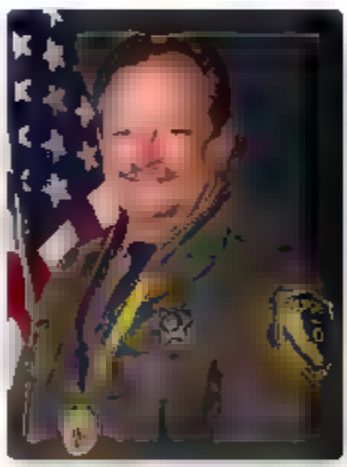
Carmelo A. Spada

Patrol Lieutenant

Department of Fish and Wildlife

7/24/2013

Special Act Award (Gold)



On July 24, 2013, at approximately 7:45 p.m., Patrol Lieutenant Carmelo A. Spada was off duty in Chowchilla, riding his mountain bike under the Highway 99 Bridge, when a woman came running out screaming, "My baby was swept away, help me!" Lt. Spada immediately dropped his bike and dove into the swift water. He swam downstream and spotted the two little girls in the water, hanging onto a tree branch. He swam to them, but realized he couldn't rescue both at the same time. He decided to take the smallest girl first. He placed her arms around his neck, swam to the opposite side of the slough, and placed her in a safe spot out of the water. He then ran back upstream, reentered the water, and swam downstream until he reached the second girl. Lt. Spada helped her untangle herself from the tree branches, placed her arms around his neck, and swam her to safety too. The Chowchilla Police department had responded to the scene for a possible drowning or swift water rescue, so Lt. Spada turned the girls and their mother over them. The girls were treated for hypothermia and shock and released back to their mother.

John Sparks

Fish Culturist

Department of Fish and Wildlife

1/2/1971

Special Act Award (Gold)

Fish Hatchery Manager Philo Jewett, Fish Culturist John Sparks and Fish and Game Warden Kenneth Cooper saved a boating accident victim who was floundering in the freezing waters of the Comanche Reservoir

Robert Sparks

Officer

Department of Justice

6/7/2013

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On June 7, 2013 at 11 52 a m , Santa Monica Co ege Po ice Sergeant Raymond Bottenfield, who was in p ain c othe and not wearing any body armor, was racing to Santa Monica College where a lone gunman had reportedly opened fire on students and facu ty, fatally wounding one person Further reports indicated that the gunman had earlier killed his father and o der brother torched his home, carjacked a passing motorist and forced her to drive him to the co ege campus. Arriving on scene, Sergeant Bottenfield met with Santa Monica Police Officers Robert Sparks and Jason Sa as Learning the gunman was in the campus ibrary they rushed to the building to find the assailant firing at a group of emp oyees who were barricaded in a storage room. Despite being exposed and vu nerab e to the assailant's fire should he turn around, the three officers crossed the opened distance and commanded the shooter to drop his weapon. As the shooter turned, he aimed his assault rifle at them. The officers opened fire, killing the assai ant ending his murderous rampage

Tony Spates

State Police Officer

California State Police

5/4/1991

Special Act Award (Gold)

State Police Officers Brian S Renfrow and Tony Spates, on May 4, 1991, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great personal risk to their own safety and lives while assisting the rescue of a five-year-old child trapped inside a burning smoke-filled apartment. At approximately 8:40 a.m., Officers Renfrow and Spates responded to a report of an apartment fire. Upon arrival at the scene they joined officers from the LAPD who made several unsuccessful attempts to rescue the small child who was trapped inside an upstairs bedroom of the burning apartment. Fire equipment had not arrived at the scene and without the benefit of breathing equipment or special protective clothing normally worn by fire fighters, all four officers made their way to the second floor of the burning apartment. The officers' search was impeded by tremendous heat and heavy smoke which made it difficult to see and breathe. To expedite the search Sate Police Officer Spates continued to look in the immediate area along with the officers from LAPD, while State Police Officer Renfrow left the apartment in an attempt to effect an entry through an exterior window. Officer Renfrow climbed up to the roof of the apartment's front porch where he and an unidentified civilian broke out a second story window. As Officer Renfrew began to crawl through the window, the officers searching inside, shouted that they had discovered the child on the smoldering mattress inside a crib. Then Officer Spates lifted the unconscious boy who was not breathing from the mattress and handed him over to one of the LAPD Officers. The LAPD Officers carried him downstairs and outside where he was resuscitated through the administration of C P R until the arrival of the Los Angeles Fire Department paramedics. Without the combined efforts of State Police Officers Spates and Renfrow, and Officers of the LAPD, who risked injury from falling debris and being overcome by smoke, the young child surely would have perished in the fire.

Michael Spears

Deputy

Department of Justice

9/25/2012

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

Investigating a child sexual abuse call, Deputy Michae Spears accompanied Detective Ali Perez and Sergeant Craig Johnson to the suspect's second floor apartment. As other deputies positioned themselves on both the stairwell and the rear of the apartment, Detective Perez knocked and announced their presence, but there was no response. Upon hearing a child crying from somewhere inside the apartment, Sergeant Johnson and Detective Perez kicked the door open and entered the apartment. Detective Perez was immediately shot by the suspect. Sergeant Johnson was also shot, but managed to return fire and call for assistance. Deputy Spears shielded Sergeant Johnson with his body and then kicked open the door of a neighboring apartment so they could take cover inside. A short time later the suspect crawled out of his apartment and was held at gunpoint by Deputy Spears and Deputy Steven Clarke. Detective Perez and Sergeant Johnson were both rushed into emergency surgery and are recovering from their injuries.

Matthew Stalter

State Park Peace Officer

Department of Parks and Recreation

11/9/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of November 9, 2018, State Park Peace Officers Scott Sipes and Matthew Sta ter were ca ed away from teaching at the Law Enforcement Academy at B tte Co ege to respond to the Camp Fire in B tte Co nty They were directed to Feather River Hospita to assist with evacuations. However, before they co d get to the hospital, the two officers stopped to he p with evac ations in the area of Clark Road and Pentz Road with officers from other agencies Traffic qu ck y became an issue and they helped coordinate traffic at Skyway and Pentz Roads At this intersection, traffic became gridlocked and a arge crowd formed The fire was quickly approaching and a decision was made to move the group to the nearby shopping center to she ter in place. Officers Sipes and Sta ter he ped move the group and then made a final sweep on Pentz Road for evacuees. Before they could get back to the she ter area, the rapidly moving fire jumped the road, trapping the officers and the evac ees. They used the Paradise Ridge Southern Baptist Church for a she ter amidst homes engulfed in fire. Once the fire passed, Officers Sipes and Sta ter re ocated the evacuees and civilian vehicles to the Kmart Shopping Center on Wagstaff Road and Clark Road. The two officers then went to Feather River Hospita to evac ate and transport patients to Oroville. While evacuating two patients, they had to stop and extinguish a vehicle that was on fire. They continued to he p evac ate people from the area, allowing nothing to deter them, including being nipped by a dog while trying to get people to safety. With no regard for his own safety, Officers Stalter went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of Ca ifornia takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Parks and Recreation State Park Peace Officer Matthew Sta ter.

Edward Stamelos

State Traffic Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

7/5/1973

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 5, 1973, at approximately 4:00 a.m., Sergeant Stamelos was cruising northbound on the San Gabriel River Freeway through the City of Whittier when he observed an apparently unattended structural fire two blocks to his left. He radioed for assistance and left the freeway at the next off ramp to head back to the scene. His search for the blaze led him to a street behind what turned out to be a one-story residence, its roof engulfed in flames that shoot some 25 feet into the air. He climbed the rear fence of the burning house and forced entry through the back door into the kitchen area where he almost overran a small, frightened girl fumbling in the smoke. Eight other children and the parents, he learned were asleep in the home. With flames now beginning to lick into the interior, Sergeant Stamelos followed the girl to the bedrooms of her sisters and brothers. He gathered as many of the children as he could and guided them out through the front door of the house. There he placed them in the care of the neighbor asking the man to let him know when he had all the nine youngsters. The sergeant returned a second and third time for the remaining children as burning rafters and debris began falling form the ceiling about them. The place was now an inferno, but Sergeant Stamelos, despite pleas to give up his effort and warnings that it was too great of a risk to take, ran once again into the fiery mass to seek the sleeping parents somewhere toward the back of the house. The daring rescue ended when he led the couple through the kitchen to safety and to the children huddled together across the street from their burning home. Not done yet, Sergeant Stamelos began awakening next-door neighbors whose homes were also threatened. It was then that several fire units arrived in response to his call 20 minutes earlier. As firefighters began laying their hoses to attack the flames, he returned to this patrol car and his vigil on the freeway

Arnold Stamps

Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/17/1989

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 17, 1989, at 5:00 pm, Officer Arnold Stamps was on routine road patrol duty in the area of the Cypress Freeway structure at the time of the Loma Prieta earthquake. Officer Stamps immediately responded and provided assistance to the numerous injured people on the ground. Frequent aftershocks were occurring and the structured continued to settle. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Stamps climbed onto the unstable freeway structure and crawled between the collapsed decks through a two foot opening to search for survivors. Officer Stamps located a crushed vehicle among the broken glass and rubble containing a seriously injured, semi-conscious victim who was lying on his back and having difficulty breathing. He eased the victim's breathing by clearing the blood from his nose and face and then dragged him to an opening to facilitate his removal by other rescuers. Extreme heavy smoke from a burning vehicle on the lower deck was causing breathing difficulties for Officer Stamps so he climbed to the top of the freeway deck to search for other survivors. In his search for other victims, he came upon fellow officer James Goodman who was attempting the rescue of a victim trapped in a crushed pickup truck. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Stamps climbed through a two foot opening of the collapsed freeway structure and maneuvered through broken glass, rubble and spilled gasoline to assist Officer Goodman in his attempt to free the trapped driver. Three hours later, firefighters arrived with the Jaws of Life. Officer Stamps continued to provide assistance by shoring up the continually settling upper level using large blocks of wood and remained at the site until the trapped driver was freed from the wreckage.

Carrie Jean Stanton

Call Center Manager

Department of Motor Vehicles

8/9/2010

Special Service Award (Silver)

On August 19, 2010, at approximately 7:45 a.m., Oak and Ca Center Manager, Carrie Jean Stanton, was wa king through the parking lot to her job when she heard screams coming from behind her. She turned and saw one of her female employees being assau ted by a man. Ms. Stanton immediately dropped everything and ran to her employee's aid Positioning herself between the assailant and the emp oyee, she screamed at him to leave her emp oyee a one, but the assailant pushed Ms. Stanton aside and attacked the employee again, this time flinging her to the ground. The assailant then jumped into his truck and started backing out of the parking space. Ms. Stanton and her employee were direct y behind the truck and the employee was still on the ground Ms. Stanton quick y pu ed her employee up and out of the way as he attempted to run them over The assai ant put the vehicle in drive and again, Ms. Stanton had to push her emp oyee out of the way as he attempted to hit her while exiting the parking lot. After the assai ant eft, Ms. Stanton drove her employee to the hospital and stayed with her They both returned to work after the employee received medical treatment

Patricia Stenger

Executive Secretary II

State Compensation Insurance Fund

10/5/1979

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 5, 1979, at 5 p.m., Patricia Stenger, an Executive Secretary II for the President of the State Compensation Insurance Fund in San Francisco, was in the President's office when she heard a scream. She came out and saw a young man wearing military fatigues with a nylon stocking over his face, carrying a sawed off .30 caliber M-1 carbine. He also had a 410-gauge shotgun and a fragmentation grenade. The deranged man was pointing a gun at a female custodian he had ordered to lie down, when he approached Ms. Stenger and pointed his gun at her. He looked away for a moment and at that time Ms. Stenger guided the custodian into the office, slammed the door shut, and locked it. They stood away from the door because they expected a shot from the gun to rip through it. Ms. Stenger then called and alerted authorities that there was a man with a gun on the sixteenth floor and they were locked in the office. To prove that he meant business, the gunman sprayed Market Street with bursts of gunfire, ultimately firing 60 rounds down on the city from a window. The 22 year old sniper held a secretary hostage and kept police at bay for 23 hours; then finally the police charged in the room and arrested him. Fortunately, no one was harmed.

Michael Stephenson

State Park Supervising Ranger

Department of Parks and Recreation

4/6/1996

Special Act Award (Gold)

On April 6, 1996, State Park Supervising Ranger Michael Stephenson and State Park Lifeguard Timothy Murphy, both off duty, responded separately to a report of a surfer stranded on a rock and waving for help at Sonoma State Beach. Upon arrival, Ranger Stephenson was able to get a glimpse of the stranded man just before darkness set in. The extremely strong surf, fog, and darkness precluded the use of paddleboards, boats or helicopters. the rescue could only be accomplished by swimming out to the victim in the 50 degree water. Ranger Stephenson and Lifeguard Murphy put on their swim fins and surfing style wetsuits which would keep them warm for only about 20 minutes and swam the half mile to the victim. Despite total darkness and strong currents, the rescuers were able to get the man safely off the rock. Because the prevailing current was carrying them toward a prominent rock outcropping being pounded by heavy waves, the rescuers, in total darkness, had to tow the man to shore against the current using a rescue buoy. After forty minutes, they reached the point just seaward of the pounding surf. A light powered by a generator guided them to the general direction of the shore, however upon arriving on shore, the light suddenly went out. At this point all three were picked up and crushed by a twelve foot wave, causing Ranger Stephenson and Lifeguard Murphy to lose contact with the victim. Lifeguard Murphy was able to quickly grab the victim and get him to safely on shore, Ranger Stephenson however, was sucked back into the water and struck repeatedly by large waves before making it to the beach. The rescuers had been in the ocean for approximately two and half hours. Once safely on shore, the rescuers and the surfer were examined by paramedics and released.

Ryan Stephenson

Warden

Department of Fish and Wildlife

9/12/2015

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 12, 2015, at approximately 3:00 p.m., California Department of Fish and Wildlife Warden Ryan Stephenson was patrolling Lake County when the Valley Fire ignited. The fire had just consumed the small town of Cobb and was now racing to consume the towns of Middletown and Hidden Valley Lake. Warden Stephenson raced ahead of the inferno to warn people about the fire and help them evacuate so they wouldn't be trapped by the flames. Working door to door, he had evacuated several homes and escorted eight people to safety when one of the residents realized their neighbor had been overlooked. The neighbor, an 88 year old wheelchair bound woman, was still in her home, lying on the couch, unaware of the approaching fire. Warden Stephenson quickly returned to her street, which was now engulfed in flames, identified the woman's house, entered, and found her asleep on her couch. She was unable to get out on her own, so Warden Stephenson carried her in his arms to his patrol truck. As he was getting ready to leave, the woman told him she was worried about her dog. Warden Stephenson then went back into her home and returned to the truck with her dog, driving them all to safety just minutes before her home became engulfed in flames. The fire ultimately devoured the woman's home and reduced it to a pile of hot ash only 12 inches high.

Darren Stewart

Fire Captain Specialist

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/26/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 26, 2018, during the Carr Fire, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Shawn Raley and Fire Captain Specialist Darren Stewart persevered in their duties at great personal risk amidst erratic fire behavior and an unprecedented, deadly fire weather event. Captain Raley and Captain Specialist Stewart made multiple trips in the Stanford Hills and Land Park subdivisions and successfully evacuated residents who had not previously been ordered to leave. While they were conducting the evacuations, conditions deteriorated to the point that their own lives were in peril. While leading civilian evacuees out of the neighborhood, Captain Raley learned that a family of three was still at home in the Stanford Hills subdivision and made the decision to return to help them evacuate. During this time, a fire tornado was seen approaching the area. Captain Raley reached the family and loaded them into his truck. As they were leaving the community, they joined Captain Specialist Stewart, who was driving his own truck. Both vehicles were forced to travel slowly due to the heavy smoke. Suddenly both trucks were struck by flying debris, rocks and embers. The vehicles began to shake violently and the passenger windows shattered as they were hit by the fire tornado. Captain Specialist Stewart saw a person attempting to get into his truck and directed him to climb into the back seat. He then saw a second man running toward him wrapped in a fire shelter. Captain Specialist Stewart directed the second man, who had been operating a bulldozer that was damaged by the fire tornado, into the back seat as well. Despite the damage to their vehicles, Captain Raley and Captain Specialist Stewart were able to drive away from the danger and deliver their passengers to other first responders, who treated their injuries and evacuated them from the area. Captain Raley and Captain Specialist Stewart saved the family of three, another individual and the bulldozer operator whose vehicle burnt during the fire tornado. With no regard for his own safety, Captain Specialist Stewart went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Specialist Darren Stewart.

George R. Stewart

Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/14/1959

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 3 40 pm, whi e on routine patrol in West Los Ange es, Officer George R Stewart observed smoke coming from a ho se. Officer Stewart stopped and asked bystanders whether anyone was in the house when a woman rushed from the rear of the house screaming "My baby is in the bedroom!" Without regard for his own personal safety, Officer Stewart immediate y entered the building through a side entrance, but was unable to reach the child because of the heavy smoke and flames. Officer Stewart then ran to the rear of the house, broke open the child's bedroom window and entered the room. Despite the dense smoke and intense heat, Officer Stewart searched unti he found the baby, who was suffering from serious burns and in imminent danger of suffocation Officer Stewart carried the one year o d baby to a window and handed him to a neighbor.

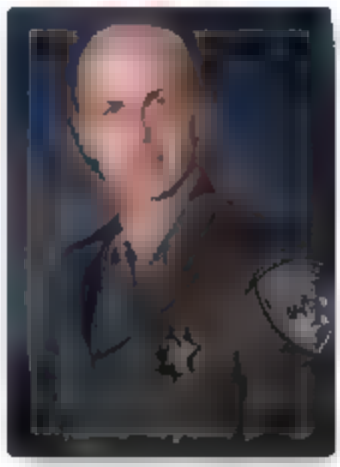
Alexander Stirling

Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/7/2018

Special Service Award (Silver)



On October 7, 2018, at approximately 4:00 p.m. California Highway Patrol Officer Alexander Stirling received a radio call of a possible "jumper" on the Pacific Highway overcrossing above Interstate 5. Upon arriving on scene, Officer Stirling observed a man walking on the right shoulder of the Pacific Highway overcrossing. San Diego Police Department Officer Curtis Bryant also responded to the scene. As Officer Stirling approached the man in his patrol vehicle, the man ran down an embankment onto northbound Interstate 5 and began walking into the traffic lanes and into the path of oncoming vehicles. Officer Stirling initiated a traffic break to slow oncoming traffic and prevent the man from being struck. Both officers then used their patrol vehicles to try and stop the man, but he ran around the patrol vehicles and failed to respond to their commands. Suddenly, the man darted towards the bridge railing and Officer Stirling immediately exited his patrol vehicle and pursued him on foot. As the man jumped over the guardrail, Officer Stirling grabbed ahold of the man's left ankle and then braced himself against the guardrail. Officer Stirling grabbed ahold of the man's left shoulder, attempting to pull him back over the guardrail. The man struggled against Officer Stirling's grip, flailing and pushing against the guardrail. Although Officer Stirling began feeling a sharp pain in his left arm, he managed to hold onto the man even as he dangled and flailed precariously 25 feet above the westbound lane of Friars Road undercrossing. Officer Bryant also exited his patrol vehicle and ran to assist Officer Stirling. Moments later, San Diego Police Department Sergeant Jason Tsui responded to assist and all three were able to pull the man over the bridge railing to safety. The man was taken into custody and transported to the county mental health facility, where he was admitted for psychiatric evaluation. Due to his rescue efforts, Officer Stirling sustained an injury to his left arm and required significant treatment. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Stirling went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Alexander Stirling

Lawrence P. Stock

Commercial Vehicle Inspection Specialist

California Highway Patrol

12/20/1999

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 20, 1999, Mr. Lawrence P. Stock was at home in Truckee, California with off-duty Officer Lawrence S. Bousquet performing maintenance on Officer Bousquet's personal vehicle. At approximately 4:15 p.m., Mr. Stock heard someone screaming and calling for help. Both men ran in the direction of the screaming and saw across the pond that two children had fallen through the ice five to ten feet from the edge of the pond. The children were struggling to maintain their positions along the broken edges of the ice. As Officer Bousquet and his wife got in their vehicle and sped to the other side of the pond, Mr. Stock ran and told his wife to call 911. He then ran to get an extension ladder and drove his vehicle to the other side of the pond. Upon his arrival, he saw one child being wrapped in a blanket by other people who had gathered at the scene. When he saw that Officer Bousquet was standing waist deep in the water attempting to reach the other victim, he ran to the water with the ladder, extending the ladder. The girl was holding on to the ice and trembling uncontrollably. She was unable to hold on to an electrical extension cord, which had been thrown to her. Mr. Stock slid the extended ladder past Officer Bousquet to the girl. When it became apparent that the girl was too weak to hold on to the ladder, Mr. Stock told Officer Bousquet, "Forget this, I am not going to let this girl drown." He began to break through the ice and wade into the deeper water. Using the ladder for support, he worked his way to the girl and grabbed her with his left hand. He then worked his way back toward Officer Bousquet who then pulled both to shore. The rescued children were transported by ambulance to Tahoe Forest Hospital and treated for pre-hypothermia. All suffered from cold water exposure

Michael Stoney

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/27/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 27, 2008, California Highway Patrol Officer Michael Stoney arrived on scene and observed two Orange County Sheriff's Deputies, talking with a woman who was on the outside of the perimeter fence of the Via California Street freeway overpass above Interstate-5 in the City of Dana Point. A citizen was also on the outside of the fence holding on to the woman to prevent her from jumping. The suicidal woman repeatedly tried to break free from the Good Samaritan's grasp by pushing backwards so she would fall onto the freeway below. Officer Stoney noticed the man's expressed exhaustion, and fearing the distraught woman could possibly cause him to fall with her, Officer Stoney reacted by climbing out onto the one-foot wide ledge above the freeway traffic. Officer Stoney traversed the edge to their location in an attempt to rescue them both. Officer Stoney was able to relieve the man by using his body to pin the woman against the fence. He also handcuffed the woman to the fence to further restrain her.

Soon after, Orange County Sheriff's deputies used a pair of bolt cutters to cut a hole in the fence, and pull all three people to safety. The suicidal woman was taken into custody by the Orange County Sheriff's deputies. The actions of Officer Stoney, without regard for his own safety, prevented major injuries or death to the distraught woman and the Good Samaritan.

Jack Story

Battalion Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

8/1/1997

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 1, 1997, CDF Assistant Chief Bill Clayton and Battalion Chief Jack Story performed extraordinary acts of heroism at great risk to their personal safety and lives. Chiefs Clayton and Story responded to the Lake Wohlford Fire and drove through a fire storm to rescue the Melvin family from certain peril. At approximately 1:00 p.m. on August 1, 1997, Chief Clayton, Incident Commander (I.C.) for his fire, along with Chief Story responded to the arson fire at Lake Wohlford. The fire spread rapidly through heavy brush and up steep canyons, threatening numerous civilians and their property. The fire destroyed 11 dwellings, 20-30 other structures and approximately 30 vehicles. After a quick perusal of the area, it was discovered by I.C. Clayton that several property owners needed to be evacuated immediately. I.C. Clayton was notified by a civilian, Cindy Poe, that the Melvin family was still trapped in the fire area. By this time the fire had developed into a fire storm with flames in excess of 50 feet high. I.C. Clayton ordered Chief Story to lead a rescue attempt to save the Melvin family. Civilian Cindy Poe, who knew the location of the Melvin family, was placed in Chief Story's vehicle. I.C. Clayton, Chief Story, Cindy Poe, Captain Clay Howe (BLM), Engine 3381 and crew members Fire Captain Mike Newell, Firefighter Andy McDaniel and Firefighter Lynne Lenell headed into the fire storm. Burning and arcing power lines fell and struck the side of I.C. Clayton's sedan. Flames and smoke conditions obscured the road bringing visibility to zero, which presented an immediate life-threating situation. Direct aerial drops were ordered on the three vehicles, but had little effect due to poor visibility and turbulent wind conditions. The rescue team reached the Melvin family just before the fire reached their location. They were placed in I.C. Clayton's vehicle and driving back through a second wall of fire to safety. Despite perilous conditions and the possibility of being swept into the fire storm, the actions of Chief Bill Clayton and Chief Jack Story stand as testimony to the quality and courage of the everyday CDF firefighter.

Earl Stower

Water Resources Engineering Associate

Department of Water Resources

2/25/1979

Special Act Award (Gold)

During a very heavy snow storm with occasional avalanches in Plumas County, California, Water Resources Engineering Associates Conrad Lahr and Earl Stower of the California Department of Water Resources began their workday at the Beckwourth Subcenter. While hearing about several avalanche warnings, Conrad received a phone call about 8 a.m. from the Sheriff's office asking for their help to rescue nine Portola High School students and an instructor bogged down from the continuous heavy snow fall. As the rescue effort began, Conrad trucked the snow cat for 15 miles, then drove it for 12 miles in areas that the snow depth has reached 20 feet. Conrad, knowing the risk of avalanches and having few options for routes, had to deal with an avalanche that buried the snow cat with him, Earl and the student's instructor for a most two hours. After shoveling themselves out of this avalanche, they continued their journey towards the students. They reached the students at 7 p.m. the same day. The students, who were formerly in a skiing class that Conrad was the assistant instructor, were wet and cold after three days of being stuck in the snow storm. Due to limited space on the snow cat, Conrad and Earl made two trips to rescue students ending the rescue effort at 3.a.m. the following day. Conrad and Earl were happy that all of the students were successfully rescued. The State of California takes great pride in presenting Conrad Lahr and Earl Stower these Gold Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Gary Strachan

State Park Ranger

Department of Parks and Recreation

5/16/1980

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 16, 1980, State Park Ranger Gary Strachan risked his own life to save two swimmers caught in the riptide off Gold Bluffs Beach at Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park. After receiving an emergency call, Ranger Strachan arrived at the scene and saw two people approximately 100 to 250 meters off shore. The water was 43 degrees with six to seven foot waves and a strong riptide moving rapidly out to sea. Ranger Strachan radioed for back-up, removed his boots and unstrapped his gun and other equipment. Stripped to his underwear, he entered the water, swam to the victim furthest from the shore. Fighting desperately against the tide, Ranger Strachan tried unsuccessfully for several minutes to bring the cold and exhausted swimmer closer to shore. He looked toward the beach and saw the second swimmer had luckily been carried safely ashore by the waves. A bystander entered the water with a surfboard to assist with the rescue, however he was unfamiliar with the board and soon in trouble himself. Ranger Strachan left the first swimmer's side, retrieved the surfboard and instructed the second swimmer to cling to a floating crab pot. Cold and exhausted, Ranger Strachan returned to the first swimmer, a large man, and with considerable effort pushed him ashore. With the last of his remaining strength, Ranger Strachan returned to the second man and brought him safely through the treacherous riptide and waves to shore.

Carrie Jean Stranton

Manager IV

Department of Motor Vehicles

8/19/2010

Special Service Award (Silver)

On August 19, 2010, at approximately 7:45 a.m. Oak and Call Center Manager Carrie Stanton was walking through the parking lot to her job at the Department of Motor Vehicle's Oakland Coliseum Field Office and Call Center, when she heard screams coming from behind her. She turned and saw one of her female employees being assaulted by a man. Ms. Stanton immediately dropped everything she was holding and ran to her employee's aid. Positioning herself between the assailant and the employee, she screamed at him to leave her employee alone, but the assailant pushed Ms. Stanton aside and attacked the employee again, this time flinging her to the ground. The assailant then jumped into his truck and started backing out of the parking space. Ms. Stanton and her employee were directly behind the truck and the employee was still on the ground. Ms. Stanton hurriedly pulled her employee up and pushed her out of the way as the assailant attempted to run them over. The assailant put the vehicle in drive and again Ms. Stanton had to push her employee out of the vehicle's way as he attempted to hit her while exiting the parking lot. After the assailant left, Ms. Stanton drove the victim to the hospital and stayed with her. They both returned to work after the employee received medical treatment.

Stanley Streeter

Chief Engineer I

Department of Mental Health

12/14/2006

Special Service Award (Silver)

On December 14, 2006, 10:25 a.m., California Department of Mental Health employees Stanley Streeter and Clifford Kozlowski were performing routine physical plant maintenance and operations duties when they both noticed a hospital police canine was trapped in a wastewater treatment pond. The canine's handler was attempting to climb down the pond to rescue his dog when he started to slide down the pond slope and into the deep raw sewage pond. Mr. Streeter quickly grabbed a rope and a rescue hook. While Mr. Streeter held the rope, Mr. Kozlowski, with rescue hook in one hand, repelled down the steep, slippery pond bank. As Mr. Kozlowski neared the pond surface, he reached out into the pond, and after some struggle and effort, was able to nudge the exhausted and near drowning canine to the pond bank near his handler.

Mr. Streeter then pulled Mr. Kozlowski up the bank with the rope. They then quickly re-positioned themselves to assist the canine and his handler, who was slowly slipping into the water. Mr. Streeter and Mr. Kozlowski threw the rope down to the handler and pulled him and his partner "Arco" up and out of danger. Mr. Streeter and Mr. Kozlowski's quick actions saved them from drowning or injury

Steven Strobel

Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/20/2022

Special Act Award (Gold)

On February 20, 2022, at 12:48 a.m., Officers Steven Strobel and Aaron Adair arrived on scene of a traffic crash where they discovered a vehicle with its engine compartment on fire with flames rapidly spreading. The male driver was unconscious and trapped inside. Officer Adair entered the passenger compartment and cut the airbags and driver's seatbelt. He then grabbed the right side of the driver from the waist, but the driver's feet were caught on the seatbelt. Officer Strobel and an off-duty deputy then assisted Officer Adair in completely removing the driver from the vehicle only seconds before the flames reached the passenger compartment. The Officers carried the unresponsive driver approximately 100 feet away as explosions were heard coming from the vehicle. Officer Strobel and the off-duty deputy then administered CPR until the West Covina Fire Department arrived who then continued CPR and other life saving measures on the driver. Sadly, the driver succumbed to his injuries at the scene. Due to the vehicle becoming fully engulfed in flames during the rescue, Officer Adair suffered severe burns to his left hand and was transported to the hospital by his partner, Officer Strobel. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Steven Strobel for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

William S. Strom

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/28/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 28, 2009, California Highway Patrol Sergeant Jack Rice, Officer William S Strom and Officer Joseph A Zagorski, saved a man's life by stopping an in-progress suicide. Officers Strom and Zagorski were the first to arrive on scene at the Cook Street overpass of the westbound lanes of Interstate 10 in Riverside County They found a distraught man who was seated on the rail of the overpass. They began speaking with the man and distracting him

Sergeant Rice arrived and quietly approached the man from the opposite side of Officers Strom and Zagorski He waited for the right moment and when the opportunity presented itself, grabbed the man around his upper body The man violently resisted in an attempt to get away from Sergeant Rice, nearly causing both of them to fall onto the westbound lanes of I-10. Officers Strom and Zagorski ran to assist Sergeant Rice with the struggling man. Officer Zagorski quickly assessed that they needed more leverage to pull the man to safety and wrapped his left leg around the right front tire of the man's vehicle and extended his reach to attempt to pull all of them towards safety After a brief struggle, which came precariously close to all parties falling onto the freeway lanes below, the sergeant, both officers and the suicidal man were pulled and fell backwards onto the safety of the overpass area. The man was taken into custody and turned over to Riverside County Sheriff deputies The actions of Sergeant Rice and Officers Strom and Zagorski prevented major injuries or death to the distraught man

Alfredo Danny Suarez

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

5/1/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 1, 2010 at 5:21 a.m., Fire Captain Alfredo Danny Suarez responded to a residential structure fire in Atwater. The Emergency Command Center in Mariposa advised the responding units that a person was still inside the structure. Upon arrival, Captain Suarez reported back to the command center that a single family dwelling was fully involved and requested the next incoming unit assume the role of Incident Commander. Without hesitation, Captain Suarez and a Merced County Firefighter donned Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus. A bystander informed Captain Suarez that the person in the structure might be located inside a bedroom in the back left corner of the home. Captain Suarez advanced a hose line into the structure, while the other firefighter stood by the doorway. Faced with poor visibility from dense smoke and intense heat from the fire inside the structure, Captain Suarez proceeded through the living room to the hallway that led to that back bedroom. Captain Suarez found an unresponsive female lying on the floor and dragged her back to the front door where other firefighters could assist him. Captain Suarez, a licensed Paramedic, performed CPR until an ambulance arrived and subsequently transported the woman to a local hospital. The State of California takes great pride in presenting Fire Captain Alfredo Danny Suarez, this Gold Medal of Valor, for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

DavidRay Sumaya

Caltrans Electrician II

Department of Transportation

2/23/2023

Special Service Award (Silver)

On February 23, 2023, at approximately 12:30 a m , Ca trans E ectrician II DavidRay Sumaya and the rest of the Ca trans District 7 Commerce Night E ectrica Crew responded to a report of flooding in the northbound travel lanes where the Interstate 5 freeway passes under Laurel Canyon Boulevard and She don Street. The low-lying stretch in Los Ange es' Sun Valley relies on pumps to clear stormwater, but on this night, power was out due to the large storm "It was raining so hard that trees were fa ing," Crew Chief Saul Rodriguez recalled. "It was chaos " Reports would later call the storm one of the strongest to hit So thern Ca ifornia in recent memory Soon, a ha f dozen cars sta ed in the deepening waters. One compact vehicle became submerged, with its headlamps strange y i uminating the muddy waters in the darkness. Mr. Sumaya and coworker Mr Oscar Mora saw two frightened travelers trapped inside the vehicle. "They were panicking! The water was coming up so fast," Chief Rodriguez said. Without hesitation, Mr Sumaya strode into the waist-deep water and heroically carried a young woman out of the vehicle and 50 feet to the side of the freeway. He then went back in and rescued the other female occupant from the vehicle. Mr Mora aided by keeping watch, ready to assist. The two women were soon safe on an overpass with other vehicle motorists, some of whom were rescued by Ca ifornia Highway Patrol officers, who were a so on the scene With the rest of the Commerce Night E ectrica Crew, Mr. Sumaya worked past the end of his 5 30 a m shift to configure the two diesel-powered pumps needed to clear the floodwaters The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Meda of Valor to California Department of Transportation, Caltrans Electrician II DavidRay Sumaya for his heroic service extending above and beyond the normal ca l of duty

Peter Sutherland

Officer

California Highway Patrol

6/8/2005

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 8, 2005, California Highway Patrol Officers Duane Greaver, Timothy Hall, and Peter Sutherland performed an act of heroism at great risk to their personal safety when they rescued a suspect from his burning vehicle. At approximately 2:57 p.m. Officer Hall was patrolling southbound on Interstate-5, near Pioneer Boulevard, when he attempted to stop a driver for failing to pass on the right safely. The driver refused to stop and led the officer in a pursuit. During the pursuit, the suspect drove in a reckless manner and caused an injury collision. The suspect attempted to flee the scene of the collision, but due to damage to his vehicle, was unable to do so. The vehicle eventually stalled on the right shoulder of southbound I-5, and the suspect wedged the right side of the vehicle against the concrete abutment of the over crossing and remained inside the vehicle. Officers Sutherland and Greaver arrived to assist Officer Hall with the arrest of the suspect. The officers repeatedly gave verbal commands for the suspect to exit the vehicle, but the suspect refused. Suddenly, the engine compartment of the suspect's vehicle burst into flames and the Orange County Fire Department was called. The flames quickly grew to approximately four feet in height and entered the interior of the suspect's vehicle. Fearing for the safety of the suspect, the officers initiated a rescue operation. Officers Hall, Sutherland, and Greaver approached the vehicle on the driver's side and again ordered the suspect out of the vehicle. The suspect locked the doors and refused to comply. Officer Sutherland broke out the driver's side window with his baton and the officers tried to physically remove the suspect. He retreated to the right front passenger seat and wrapped his arms in the seat belt harness. As the interior of the vehicle caught fire, Officer Greaver entered the vehicle through the passenger side window and pushed the suspect toward the open driver's side door. The suspect continued to resist but was finally removed by Officers Hall and Sutherland and carried away from the burning vehicle, where he was taken into custody.

Peter Sutherland

Officer

California Highway Patrol

6/8/2009

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 8, 2005, California Highway Patrol Officers Peter Sutherland, Duane Greaver, , and Timothy Hall rescued a suspect from his burning vehicle. At approximately 2:57 p.m., Officer Hall was patrolling southbound on Interstate-5, near Pioneer Boulevard in Orange County, when he attempted to stop a driver for failing to pass on the right safely. The driver refused to stop and led the officer in a pursuit. During the pursuit, the suspect drove in a reckless manner and caused an injury collision. The suspect attempted to flee the scene of the collision, but due to damage to his vehicle, was unable to do so. The vehicle eventually stalled on the right shoulder of southbound I-5, and the suspect wedged the right side of the vehicle against the concrete abutment of the over crossing and remained inside the vehicle. Officers Sutherland and Greaver arrived to assist Officer Hall. The officers repeatedly gave verbal commands for the suspect to exit the vehicle, but he refused. Suddenly, the engine compartment of the suspect's vehicle burst into flames and the Orange County Fire Department was called. The flames quickly grew to four feet high and entered the interior of the car. Fearing for the safety of the suspect, the officers initiated a rescue. Officers Hall, Sutherland, and Greaver approached the vehicle on the driver's side and again ordered the suspect out of the vehicle. The suspect locked the doors and refused to comply. Officer Sutherland broke out the driver's side window with his baton, and the officers tried to physically remove the suspect. He retreated to the right front passenger seat and wrapped his arms in the seat belt harness. As the interior of the vehicle caught fire, Officer Greaver entered the vehicle through the passenger side window and pushed the suspect toward the open driver's side door. The suspect continued to resist but was finally removed by Officers Hall and Sutherland and carried away from the burning vehicle, where he was taken into custody. Their actions saved the man from severe injury or death.

Travis Sutton

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

3/10/2021

Special Service Award (Silver)

On March 10, 2021, Caltrans Equipment Operator II Travis Sutton of District 2 Pulga Maintenance, was conducting snow removal operations on State Route 70 in Butte County near the Shady Rest Area. A little after 7 a.m., he noticed snow tracks leading from the roadway towards the Feather River. As Mr. Sutton slowed, he did not see a vehicle. He immediately turned around and pulled over in a safe spot to inspect the area. When Mr. Sutton looked over the riverbank, he saw a vehicle in the river. Mr. Sutton immediately contacted dispatch to give a location of the vehicle. While doing so, a young woman's head popped up from the rocks in the river near the vehicle, saying "Please, help me." As Mr. Sutton made his way to the young woman, he noticed the rocks were too big and slippery for her to climb up. Mr. Sutton then asked if he could pull her up onto the large rocks, and she agreed. Mr. Sutton laid on his stomach, grabbed her hands, and pulled her up. Once they got up to the roadway, Mr. Sutton gave the young woman a sweatshirt and rain jacket in efforts to warm her up. Mr. Sutton noticed that she was bleeding from her head, and that her lips were turning purple. Mr. Sutton directed her to warm up in the plow truck while Mr. Sutton deployed road flares. California Highway Patrol and area EMS arrived to the scene, and transported the young woman to the hospital. Mr. Sutton's attentiveness, selflessness, and willingness to go above and beyond to assist the young woman reflect great credit upon himself, his crew, and his department. With no regard for his own safety, Mr. Sutton went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Transportation Equipment Operator II Travis Sutton.

Howard Swafford

EDD Program Representative

Employment Development Department

3/25/1981

Special Act Award (Gold)

Emp oyment Program Representatives Alfred Carrizosa and Howard Swafford were returning from an out-of-town business trip when they spotted a sma car with severa youths inside stalled in the fast ine on Highway 91 near Corona. Without hesitation they pu ed their car off the highway, ran back to route traffic around the vehicle, but it was too ate Before Mr Carrizosa and Mr Swafford could get there, another vehic e plowed into the rear of the disabled car Its gas tank exp oded, engulfing the car in a ball of flames Mr Swafford, a World War II veteran suffering more than a 30 percent disabi ity, did not falter He ran to the driver's side of the flaming car and pulled out a teenage girl, her hair and clothes afire. Carrying her to safety, Mr Swafford rolled her on the ground to extinguish the flames With his bare hands he patted the fire out in her hair. Meanwhile Mr Carrizosa, a Vietnam War veteran ran to the passenger side and pulled a second youth to safety He ran back to help a third teenage girl through the window. A fourth youth, a boy, managed to escape unassisted The gir s were hospitalized with second and third degree burns over 15 to 35 percent of their body, but they survived. Mr. Swafford suffered second degree burns on his right foot, left knee, hands and head in addition to numerous cuts and abrasions.

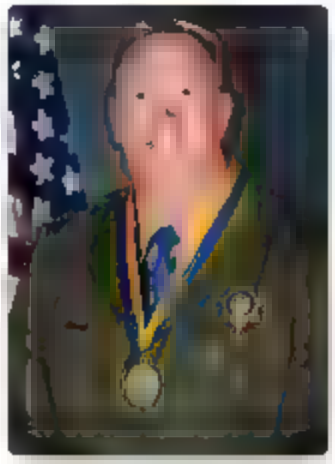
Christopher J. Swanberg

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/2/2016

Special Service Award (Silver)



On February 2, 2016, at 12:05 p.m., Officer Christopher Swanberg, responded to a call in the Fresno area of a pedestrian who appeared to be suicidal. Officer Swanberg arrived on scene and made contact with the pedestrian. The man was standing barefoot atop the concrete bridge rail bordering the east side of State Route 41, making statements that he wanted to die. His position atop the railing placed him directly over the westbound traffic lanes of Herndon Avenue. Officer Swanberg engaged the individual in dialogue to build rapport and gain trust. As Officer Swanberg continued to communicate with him, he feigned difficulty hearing, which allowed him to strategically decrease the distance between the two. While talking, the individual swayed back and forth, lost his balance, and fell backward, landing on the freeway side of the bridge rail. The individual immediately scrambled to his feet and lunged towards the bridge rail, but Officer Swanberg rushed forward and grabbed him. The individual struggled fiercely to break free from Officer Swanberg's grasp by deliberately pulling away, flailing his arms and spinning around, bringing them both closer to the rail. Officer Swanberg was unable to keep the individual from moving back to the rail and swinging his left leg over. Officer Swanberg continued to hold him, while the individual pushed with his right leg and pulled with his arms in an attempt to break free and fall to the roadway below. Officer Swanberg exerted all of his energy to keep both of them from going over the rail. Eventually, with the assistance of two passing motorists, Officer Swanberg was able to pull the individual back over the rail where he was placed into custody and transported by ambulance to a psychiatric facility.

Raymond W. Swickard

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/27/1991

Special Service Award (Silver)

State Traffic Officer Raymond W Swickard, on April 27, 1991, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his personal safety by assisting an adult male by removing his burning shirt and relocating a smoking gas can in the victim's vehicle still parked next to the gas pumps at the gas station, to an area away from the nearby fuel pumps. At approximately 2 52 p.m., while on a coffee break at the Food and Fuel Mini market located in the town of Waterford, Officer Swickard heard a loud "pop". Observing a reflection of flames on the glass doors of the cold case located outside, Officer Swickard jumped up and as he started out the door, the clerk yelled that a man was on fire. As he reached the door, he observed a man running away with his upper body on fire. Office Swickard chased the man for about 30' before he caught up with him and without regard for his own personal safety, was able to safely remove the burning shirt. After ensuring that the man could breath, Officer Swickard ran back inside the station to summon aid. Upon returning to the victim's location, Officer Swickard noticed that a smoking gas can was still in the bed of the truck parked at the gas pumps. He grabbed the can and placed it a safe distance from the gas station, thereby preventing the possibility of further explosions. Officer Swickard's swift actions prevented further serious injury or death to the victim as well as preventing the entire gas station from exploding

Mario Tano

San Diego Sheriff, Deputy

Other

10/26/2003

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

October 26, 2003, Deputies Mark Johnston and Mario Tano put their lives and personal safety on the line for the citizens that we are commissioned to serve. They went back into heavy fire and choking smoke to check on and rescue people and animals that otherwise may have perished in this fire. After successfully escaping this blaze themselves these Deputies went on helping burn victims and assisted with investigating the deaths that occurred in the Barona Reservation area on October 26th.

David M. Tapia

Correctional Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

7/28/2016

Special Service Award (Silver)

On July 28, 2016, at 5:00 p.m., a man stole a knife from the Costco store in Modesto, and threatened employees and shoppers. Costco employees evacuated the store, and forced the man out by creating a barrier with shopping carts and other objects. The knife-wielding man remained a danger to everyone outside the store. Modesto Police Detective John McGill stated that the man's actions "brought panic to the general public." Correctional Officer Kevin Machado approached the man outside the store, drew his concealed weapon, identified himself as a peace officer, and ordered the man to drop the knife. The man jabbed with the knife, and lunged at Officer Machado several times. The man continued to pursue Officer Machado, getting within five to eight feet of the officer. Officer Machado fired a single shot and wounded the man, thus stopping the assault. After the man was released from the hospital, he was charged with two counts of assault with a deadly weapon, and one count of robbery. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Machado's heroic service saved the lives of fellow Costco shoppers from a knife-wielding attacker. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to Correctional Officer Kevin Machado

David M. Tapia

Correctional Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

8/31/2021

Special Service Award (Silver)

On August 31, 2021, at approximately 11 29 a.m., Correctional Officer David Tapia was conducting duties off North Kern State Prison grounds in an unmarked CDCR state vehicle As he approached a shopping center he observed an adult male throw a softball-sized rock at the front window of the Kern County Department of Human Services building. Officer Tapia immediately dialed 911, identified himself and informed the dispatcher of the nature of the emergency While on hold, Officer Tapia pulled off to the side of the street and maintained a constant visual on the subject from a safe distance Officer Tapia observed the subject throwing softball-sized rocks at the window several more times Officer Tapia decided to enter the shopping center parking lot positioning his vehicle adjacent to the building keeping a constant visual on the subject from a safe distance Officer Tapia once again observed the subject throw a large rock this time shattering the window The subject suddenly entered the building through the front door Unaware of the subject's actions and still waiting to convey his observations to emergency services Officer Tapia exited his vehicle to get a closer look at what the subject was doing Officer Tapia could hear voices screaming from inside the building He then saw the subject exit the building and stand at the threshold of the front door with what appeared to be a canister in his left hand, with a flame protruding from the top of the canister The subject threw the lit canister inside the building engulfing the building in flames Observing these actions, understanding the life-threatening circumstances occurring in his presence and with an unknown number of civilians and children inside the building, Officer Tapia decided to make contact and detain the subject Officer Tapia un-holstered his state-issued firearm and carefully walked toward the subject who was walking toward him. With the subject approximately 15 yards away Officer Tapia ordered the subject to get down on the ground to which he complied and assumed a prone position. Officer Tapia then ordered the subject to place both of his hands behind his back and to cross his feet to which he also complied. Officer Tapia kept his weapon pointed at the subject as he waited for additional police assistance A short time later a marked Delano Police Department unit arrived. The subject was restrained and taken into custody Ultimately the fire was extinguished and thankfully no one inside the building was injured Officer Tapia demonstrated a great act of bravery to protect his community and a noteworthy display of courage in the face of immediate life-threatening danger He had no way of knowing how many civilians were in the building, and he knew children might be present Officer Tapia was alone on hold with emergency services and chose to follow his gut instinct to protect others The Director of the Department of Human Services in Delano sent a thoughtful letter of appreciation to Officer Tapia thanking him personally for his involvement in the apprehension of the individual responsible for this terrible act The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Correctional Officer David Tapia for his heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty

Delbert Tate

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

3/18/1968

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 18, 1968, Fire Captain Delbert Tate performed and extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his own safety and life to save the lives of two men trapped by a cave-in at the bottom of a construction ditch. Contractors were installing a sewer line in the area of the Sunnymead Fire Station in Riverside County. The fire station was normally staffed with one professional firefighter and supplemented with on call volunteer firefighters, a second professional firefighter and a state radio technician were at the fire station for other department business. The firefighters were alerted that a cave-in had occurred at the sewer line construction site. Fire Captains George McGuire and Delbert Tate along with Radio Technician Ronald James answered the alarm. Two men - Lloyd Self and James Hansen were working at the bottom of a 13-foot deep trench when the bank gave way and completely covered them with loose dirt. The rescuers succeeded in uncovering Self's head, but more loose dirt slipped into the trench. Captain McGuire then placed himself between Self and the sliding dirt. He was buried to his waist and Captain Tate was buried to his knees. Despite this set back, McGuire, Tate and James continued their rescue operations, managing to uncover and revive the two buried men.

Aaron Taylor

CHP Officer

California Highway Patrol

11/3/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

"On November 3, 2007, at approximately 1 30 a m , California Highway Patrol Officers Aaron Taylor and Kelley Walker responded to a call of an injury accident on westbound State Route 178 in Bakersfield Upon arrival, they found an overturned car on fire with two citizens attempting to rescue a man trapped inside. While the intensity of the heat forced the citizens away from the car Officers Taylor and Walker approached the car, grabbed the man's legs and dragged him to a safe area, just as multiple small explosions began to fully engulf the car. While removing the man, Officers Taylor and Walker saw that his head, right arm, and torso were on fire One of the citizens attempted to extinguish the flames with a shirt, which Officer Walker subsequently used to smother the fire. But the man's body reignited, so Officer Walker used bottled water to put out the flames. Officers Walker and Taylor triaged the man's burns and provided first aid to two other occupants of the vehicle, including the driver, who had been ejected during the roll-over accident Due to the heroic efforts of Officers Taylor and Walker, the man survived despite severe burns to his head and upper torso The two occupants were treated at a medical center and released; the driver was taken into custody for driving under the influence. "

Ernest "Ernie" D. Taylor

Associate Engineer

Department of Water Resources

2/8/1998

Special Service Award (Silver)

Water Resources Technician Richard " Burnett, Associate Engineering Geologist William Shanks, Associate Engineer Ernest Taylor, and Senior Engineer Kurt C Kovac, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great personal risk to their own safety in the rescue of Ms. Rachelle Anderson's two sma chi dren, Oscar and Alicia, who were trapped in an overturned car that was sinking 15 feet offshore in the storm-swo en, frigid, swift, and muddy Sacramento River On the morning of February 8, 1998, at approximately 7:55 a.m. while on special flood duty for the Department of Water Resources in the Delta, near Antioch, Mr Burnett, Mr Shanks, Mr Tay or and Mr. Kovac were flagged down by a truck driver Looking down the perilous levee embankment, they saw a car sinking into the river, its rear half sti visible above the surface of the water. Mr. Burnett immediate y ran down the embankment, jumped into the water and swam towards the car As soon as he reached it, he saw Oscar, the baby, sti strapped in the chi d car sea, sinking into the water. Mr. Burnett grabbed the car seat just as Oscar's head was slipping below the surface He freed Oscar and then handed him to Mr Taylor Mr Kovac met Mr Taylor on the muddy slope of the steep embankment and took Oscar up to the road. Still trapped inside the car, three-year o d A icia was sti submerged and under peril with each passing second. Mr. Shanks first and then Mr. Burnett, dove under the murky, co d water into the car through the open door on the driver's side, each attempting to rescue A icia It was very difficult to see and the rescuers became disoriented inside the overturned car. They each tried to free Alicia from her fastened seat belt without success. Time running out, the only way to rescue Alicia was to turn the car upright. The men joined forces, trying to reposition the car upright. Incredibly, the 3,000 pound car turned easi y Mr Burnett dove under the water, reached in the passenger-side door and re eased the unconscious child from her seat belt. Mr. Burnett and Mr. Tay or rushed to get her ashore. By this time Alicia was unconscious, extremely co d, ashen, and not breathing· her body was completely limp. Mr. Burnett and another individual took turns giving her mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Alicia finally gasped for air, coughed her throat clear of water, and started breathing Mr. Taylor and Mr Kovac wrapped Alicia in jackets and sweatshirts, and Mr. Shanks held her in the warm truck unti paramedics arrived. Meanwhile, Mr. Kovac brought Ms Anderson up the embankment to be close to her children. The State of California takes great pride in presenting these medals of valor for acts of heroism extending far and above the normal call of duty

Shaun Tayman

Correctional Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

5/24/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 24, 2017, at 10:20 a.m. in the Pelican Bay State Prison outdoor exercise yard, holding approximately three hundred inmates, a one-on-one fight started. Correctional officers responded to the fight to stop the incident. While responding staff were attempting to quell the incident, approximately 130 inmates began rushing and attacking the officers. Officer Shaun Tayman ran into a large group of attacking inmates to save his fellow officers. As he responded to the incident he could see a large number of inmates running toward the officers to take part in the assault. Officer Tayman utilized force in the form of pepper spray to reach his fellow officers. At one point, Officer Tayman found himself amid a group of 10-15 inmates and noticed that one of the inmates had a state-issued baton in his hand. Knowing that the inmate had a deadly weapon, Officer Tayman, along with other officers near him, advanced on the group of inmates. The inmates eventually complied with orders and the inmate with the baton relinquished it to Officer Tayman. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Tayman's heroic act saved the lives of fellow officers and inmates in the face of a large prison fight. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctional Officer Shaun Tayman.

Jeff Tempest

Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/18/2006

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 18, 2006, at approximately 6:00 p.m. California Highway Patrol Officer Jeff Tempest was working traffic enforcement in the Redding Area when he responded to a call of a person straddling the bridge rail of State Route 151, over Interstate 5. Upon arrival, he immediately realized the severity of the situation. The despondent man tossed his cell phone to Officer Tempest and asked him to tell his girlfriend who was on the line "sorry she couldn't be with him." The man sat to the outside ledge of the bridge over I-5. Hanging onto the metal rail, he ordered Officer Tempest to back away as he began to count to ten. Officer Tempest inched toward the dangling man who threatened to let go if he didn't back away. At the count of five, the man released one hand from the bridge railing. When he reached the count of ten, Officer Tempest lunged forward over the bridge rail grabbing him under his shoulder with one hand and the man's belt with the other. Officer Tempest's upper body was hanging over the edge of the bridge, anchored only by his legs and the bridge rail. The dangling man released his remaining hand from the bridge railing, forcing Officer Tempest to support the man's entire 185 pound body weight. Officer Tempest managed to hoist the man to safety, saving him from serious injury or death, and placed him in protective custody.

Michael Terry

Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/10/2001

Special Act Award (Gold)

Ca ifornia Highway Patrol Sergeant Daniel Snook and Officer Michael Terry on September 10, 2001, performed acts of heroism at risk to their personal safety by rescuing an officer who had been wounded by suspect gunfire and providing cover fire to protect the .ives of other .aw enforcement officers and citizens who were caught in the crossfire. At approximate.y 11 18 p m , Sergeant Snook was patro ing the area of Zinfandel Drive and Internationa Drive, in the unincorporated County of Sacramento, when he observed a slow-moving vehic e on northbound Zinfandel Drive. The vehicle was being driven by Mr. Joseph Ferguson, a former employee of Burns International Security, who was targeting security guards currently employed by Burns International Security. He had a ready taken the lives of five individuals in three different locations. Sergeant Snook advised fellow Officers Martin Tapia, and Nick Sa meron of the suspect's ocation At that very moment, the suspect stopped his vehicle, stepped out and began firing at Sergeant Snook and Officers Tapia and Salmeron, who had just arrived on the scene. The suspect had an AK-47 assault rifle, a sawed-off shotgun, and a pisto Officer Tapia was struck once from a round fired by the suspect. Sergeant Snook continued to engage the suspect by returning fire, thus protecting Officer Tapia and civilian bystanders in the area He did this whi e sustaining unre enting gunfire from the suspect and simultaneously rendering first aid to the fa en officer Officers Michael Terry and Trevor Shie ds then arrived on scene and began to exchange gunfire with the suspect. At this point, Officer Terry took the ead by discharging 12 rounds from his weapon, as the suspect returned to his vehic e, whi e continuing to shoot at the officers Sergeant Snook continued to render first aid to the fallen Officer Tapia and coordinated the units pursuing the suspect who had subsequently fled the scene. The suspect eventually came to a stop, exited his vehicle and began to shoot at the pursuing officers. Officer Terry continued to risk his life by exchanging direct gunfire with the suspect. This cover fire provided by Officer Terry was successfu in diverting the suspect's attention from other law enforcement officers and bystanders, a owing for the necessary rescues and evacuations to occur. In the end, Officer Terry discharged over 60 rounds of ammunition at the suspect, while the suspect fired over 150 rounds of ammunition at him and other involved officers The suspect ater re-entered his vehic e and ended his own life. Sergeant Snook and Officer Terry acted without hesitation or thought to their own personal safety in order to protect the lives of fe ow officers and citizens

Keith Thornhill

Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/30/1990

Special Act Award (Gold)

While patrolling the Costa Mesa Freeway in Santa Ana, Officer Keith Thornhill saw a traffic collision in which a small sedan was struck from behind. The small car immediately burst into flames. Officer Thornhill ran to the vehicle and after finding both occupants unconscious, attempted to open the driver's door. The door was jammed, so Officer Thornhill smashed the window and pulled the driver to safety. He returned to the passenger's side and again was forced to break the window. As Thornhill reached into the vehicle, the burning headliner fell onto the victim's head. Officer Thornhill ripped the headliner off the victim and unfastened his safety belt. As Thornhill attempted to pull the victim from car, the victim's foot became entangled in the steering wheel. Officer Thornhill reached into the car, beating back the flames with his bare hands and released the victim's foot. He then dragged the man to safety. Officer Thornhill suffered second degree burns to his hands and right arm.

Mike A. Ticknor

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/31/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 31, 2007, California Highway Patrol Officer Mike Ticknor was driving north on State Route 70 at Garden Grove Drive near Oroville when he received a call from the Chico Communication Center of a total bridge collapse on State Route 149. Officer Ticknor was the first to arrive at the scene and found an injured construction worker buried under debris from the collapsed structure and a Fed Ex truck crushed between two 3,000 pound steel beams, with the driver trapped inside. Without regard for his safety and knowing the instability of the remaining bridge structure, Officer Ticknor crawled into the pile of fallen debris to assess the construction worker's condition and found that he had suffered a broken elbow, pelvis, and leg. Officer Ticknor moved him to a safe area, and then made his way back to the driver trapped inside the crushed Fed Ex truck. After assessing the driver's injuries and determining he couldn't be moved from the vehicle, Officer Ticknor reassured him that emergency personnel were on the way. He then coordinated rescue efforts with CalTrans and bridge site contractors, and after an extensive three-hour rescue effort, successfully freed the man from his Fed Ex truck. Amazingly, the man only received a sprained ankle, scrapes and stitches to his nose. Officer Ticknor's actions during this rescue were directly responsible for saving these men from further injury or possible death.

Rogelio Tienda

Correctional Officer

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

7/15/2025

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of Sunday, May 28, 2023, at approximately 6:00 a.m., California State Prison Corcoran Correctional Officer Alejandro Vasquez, was driving home after his shift when he was involved in a violent head-on collision. The crash left him unconscious, and his vehicle quickly caught fire. CDCR Correctional Officer Rogelio Tienda arrived at the scene and saw the horrific aftermath of the hit-and-run collision. Officer Vasquez was trapped in the driver's seat, surrounded by smoke and flames. Officer Tienda immediately grabbed a crowbar from his vehicle and worked to smash the window. He pulled Officer Vasquez from the wreckage just moments before flames fully engulfed the vehicle. After moving Officer Vasquez a safe distance, he kept him calm and monitored his extensive injuries. Then, Officer Tienda noticed someone walking away from the scene. Realizing this person might be involved in the collision and attempting to flee, he immediately followed. Without regard for his own safety, Officer Tienda pursued the individual for about a mile before catching up with him. The individual appeared to be intoxicated. Officer Tienda ordered him to return to the scene of the crash, and after several commands, the individual finally complied. The California Highway Patrol arrived shortly afterwards and took the individual into custody. Officer Tienda's quick thinking and fearless actions saved a fellow officer's life and helped ensure a dangerous individual did not escape. His unwavering dedication to his duty, even in the face of personal risk, went far beyond expectations. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Correctional Officer Rogelio Tienda, for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

David Tilstra

Deputy Orange County Sherrif's Department

Other

6/12/2004

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On June 12, 2004, Deputy David Tilstra of the Orange County Sheriff's Department was the pilot of the helicopter being used to help officers on the ground locate an armed suspect in Black Star Canyon in rural eastern Orange County. He displayed exceptional valor by continuing to pilot the helicopter after he had been shot by the armed suspect.

Frank Tolerico

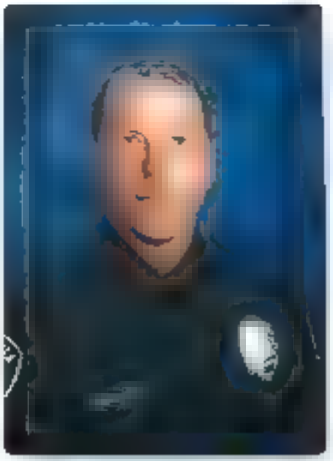
Fontana Police Department, Officer

Other

7/4/2005

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On July 4, 2005, Officer Frank Tolerico of the Fontana Police Department was shot twice during a physical struggle with a known gang member. He was shot once in the chest, striking his bulletproof vest, and once through the neck. Bleeding profusely, Officer Tolerico nevertheless refused to quit and continued to fight until he was able to pull his own weapon and shoot and kill the suspect.



Craig Tolmie

Assistant Chief, Fresno-Kings Administrative Unit

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/25/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of Thursday, February 25, 2010, CAL FIRE emp oyees Craig Tolmie and Ron Eldridge, along with Law Enforcement Officers from the CAL FIRE Fresno-Kings Unit and the Fresno County Sheriff's Department, were serving a search warrant at a residence in the community of Minkler. A man at the residence was suspected of setting eleven arson fires and shooting at inhabited dwellings in which a citizen was injured by gunfire. While attempting to serve the warrant, the suspect fired upon Officers from inside the residence. A detective was wounded and trapped on the front porch. Officers returned gunfire and quick y deve oped a rescue plan to retrieve the wounded detective. Under continuous gunfire from the residence, another officer on scene crawled from his position of cover to the porch while Captain E dridge returned gunfire at the suspect. Captain Eldridge saw that the wounded detective was caught on a fence as the other officer was trying to drag him out to safety. Captain Eldridge, at great risk to himse f, left his position of cover, moved forward into the open, and exposed himself to the suspect's gunfire. While he continued to fire his weapon at the suspect, Captain Eldridge helped free the wounded detective, and with the other officer pulled the detective to a safe position. Meanwhile, Chief Tolmie was in a position of cover behind a vehicle parked direct y in front of the suspect's residence, when he heard a Deputy call for a bando eer of shotgun ammunition from within a patrol car. Knowing that the Deputy was at risk, Chief Tolmie left his position of cover and moved through the open area, directly exposing himself to gunfire. Chief Tolmie retrieved the bando eer and a shotgun lying on the ground and delivered them to the Deputy, putting himse f at great personal risk to help a fellow officer. The State of California takes great pride in presenting to Chief Craig Tolmie and Captain Ron Eldridge, these Go d Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Wesley Tom

Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/13/2019

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 13, 2019, at approximately 12:47 a m , California Highway Patrol Officers Matthew Frattaroli and Wesley Tom were dispatched to a commercial vehicle crash on Interstate 5, in the city of Anaheim The truck tractor and trailer were on fire and bystanders advised the officers that the driver of the truck tractor was trapped inside the burning wreckage. Officer Frattaroli saw the truck driver apparently unconscious within the burning wreckage Officer Frattaroli used a fire extinguisher to combat the flames surrounding him Both Officer Frattaroli and Officer Tom climbed into the wreckage to try and pull the victim out of the burning vehicle. Officer Tom used a knife to cut the driver's seat belt and, with Officer Frattaroli's help, the officers were able to successfully pull the driver free from the burning wreckage. In total, it took the officers nearly two minutes to successfully free the driver from the burning wreckage while the fire grew around them. Officers Frattaroli and Tom dragged the driver away from the burning truck, to a safe distance, as the truck became totally engulfed in flames. Local fire and rescue provided medical care and transport to a nearby hospital. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Tom went above and beyond the call of duty The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Wesley Tom.

Sergio Toscano

Detective

Other

2/5/2010

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

Homicide detectives from the Fresno County Sheriff's Office, including safety personnel from allied agencies in the town of Minkler, attempted to serve a search warrant. The search warrant team, comprised of Detectives Mark Chapman, Mark Eaton, Joe Wahlenmaier and Robert McEwen, approached the house. The other personnel surrounded the perimeter of the home. The team knocked and announced their presence, and demanded entry several times. The team then broke down an exterior porch door to gain entry, however, they discovered another locked door. Detectives again announced their presence and demanded entry, yet the suspect refused. As Detective Wahlenmaier hit the door with a ram, the suspect, who was lying-in-wait, began shooting through the closed door. Detective Wahlenmaier was shot and immediately collapsed. Detective McEwen instinctively covered Detective Wahlenmaier with his own body, to protect him from further harm. As the gun battle ensued, Sergeant Lopez and Detective Toscano attempted for several minutes to pull Detective Wahlenmaier from the porch, however, his equipment caught on the door frame. Deputy Harris returned cover fire, allowing other deputies to free Detective Wahlenmaier while the gunfire continued. Deputy Harris sustained an injury to his right eye and the right side of his face from a fragmented bullet fired by the suspect. Deputy Harris continued to return cover fire. As the gun battle continued, it was learned that Fresno County Sheriff's Detective Wahlenmaier was mortally wounded. An additional tragedy was the loss of Reedley Police Officer Javier Bejar who was shot and killed by the suspect while aiding sheriff deputies, as you will hear in the next citation. The standoff ultimately ended when the suspect took his own life.

Cecil Totherow

Highway Maintenance Technician II

Department of Transportation

1/27/1968

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 27, 1968 on Interstate 5, approximately 30 miles north of Redding, Maintenance Technician Cecil Totherow was performing his regular job duties when he witnessed a vehicle collide with the Slate Creek Bridge and burst into flames. Within seconds of the collision, Mr. Totherow ran over and proceeded to pull the seriously injured male driver, pinned inside, out of the automobile. The car and area were burning fiercely because of spilled gasoline from the damaged car, and, to make matters worse, the car contained several boxes of shells that were exploding. With total disregard for his own safety and placing his life in grave danger, Mr. Totherow's prompt actions and courage undoubtedly saved the life of the victim.

David Trabucco

Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/28/1987

Special Act Award (Gold)

On February 28, 1987 after repeated attempts, Officer David Trabucco managed to rescue a paralyzed man from a burning house minutes before the house exploded. Officer Trabucco endangered his safety and risked his life in order to save the life of a helpless victim, and his actions were above and beyond the call and scope of duty that day

Rolf Trondsen

Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/18/1991

Special Service Award (Silver)

On April 18, 1991, Officer Rolf Trondsen, while off duty and unarmed in a park in Salinas, saw a robbery suspect run into the park in an attempt to escape from a citizen in pursuit. Officer Trondsen sent a bystander to place a 911 call to the Salinas Police Department then kept the suspect under observation in order to safeguard the 100-200 children and adults in the park. When the suspect reacted to the sound of approaching sirens by wielding a tire iron in a threatening fashion, Officer Trondsen moved to disarm and disable him, then kept him subdued until Salinas police officer arrived and took him into custody

Joseph Tronti

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/20/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 20, 2008, California Highway Patrol Officer Joseph Tronti and Officer Jason Flores were conducting a routine enforcement stop on a vehicle which came to a stop in the parking lot of a restaurant in Riverside, California. While contacting the occupants of the vehicle, the officers heard the sound of gunfire emanating near the entrance to the restaurant. They saw a male suspect with a handgun shooting toward a group of pedestrians. Officer Tronti immediately charged the suspect with his pistol drawn, yelling "Stop Police!" The suspect began to briskly walk away, but as Officer Tronti got closer to him, the suspect turned and pointed his pistol toward Officer Tronti. Fearing for his life, Officer Tronti fired his weapon at the suspect. The suspect was struck by a round from Officer Tronti's gun and was taken into custody after a short foot pursuit. The actions of Officer Tronti, without regard for his own safety, prevented possible injuries or death to the pedestrians on scene.

Kenneth Tyler

Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/18/2003

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officers Ken Tyler and James Sheeran, on January 18, 2003, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at risk to their personal safety when they removed an unconscious driver and passenger from a burning vehicle. At approximately 2 34 a m , a 1996 Chevrolet Impala was driving at a high rate of speed on Interstate 580. The car passed Officers Tyler and Sheeran and immediate y tried to avoid apprehension by exiting the freeway The driver eventua y turned onto Southfront Road just west of Greenvi e Road in the city of Livermore and became invo ved in so o vehicle traffic co ision The vehic e struck a signa box, which ignited a fire in the vehicle's trunk Both the driver and passanger were rendered unconscious as the fire began to spread into the passenger compartment. Officers Ty er and Sheeran observed the vehicle pass them, but eventually lost sight of it. As they continued in the potential path of the vehicle, they observed plumes of smoke and responded to investigate. Despite the vehicle fire and heavy smoke, both officers immediately ran to the driver side to render assistance. Officer Tyler extricated the unconscious driver while Officer Sheeran remained with the unconscious passenger. After removing the driver to a place of safety Officer Tyler returned to the vehicle to assist with the extrication of the passenger As the vehic e fi ed with thick, heavy smoke and flames, both officers then moved the passanger from the right-front seat, across the driver compartment and out of the driver's door. Officers Tyler and Sheeran exhibited great personal courage in their efforts to save the life of another Both suffered smoke inhalation which required medica treatment

Kelly A. Valdez

Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/3/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 11:50 p.m., on March 3, 2008, California Highway Patrol Officers Kelly A. Valdez and Benjamin A. Glapenske were traveling northbound on Highway 99, south of State Route 46 near Bakersfield, when they saw flames from a car fire on the railroad tracks east of the freeway. Officer Valdez called the Bakersfield Communications Center and requested fire department assistance. Arriving at the scene, they saw two men moving inside the burning vehicle. The car's engine was completely engulfed with fire giving off intense heat. Officer Glapenske grabbed a fire extinguisher and attempted to put out the fire, but the extinguisher malfunctioned. Officers Glapenske and Valdez went to the rear passenger door and together pulled it open. Seeing movement from the driver, they reached in, grabbed the man's arm, and dragged him out through the back rear door and to a safe area away from the car. Officers Glapenske and Valdez saw the flames were engulfing the car's headliner, and quickly moved towards the second occupant. The heavy fire and smoke made it difficult to breathe, but they could see the man's face, arms and chest were on fire so they reached back into the intense heat, grabbed the man's arms and dragged him out of the front seat, through the back door and to a safe area. Immediately after, small explosions erupted from the car, and they were forced to move both victims further away before Officer Valdez could assess their medical condition. When the fire department arrived, the victims were treated and transported to Kern Medical Center in Bakersfield where it was determined the passenger's burns were major, so he was flown to the Fresno Burn Center for further treatment. The driver, who suffered serious injuries, was unlicensed, tested positive for alcohol and was taken into custody upon his release from the hospital. Officers Glapenske and Valdez were treated at the scene for burns and smoke inhalation. Their heroic actions successfully rescued two men from severe or life-threatening burns

Cristi Valencia

Senior Legal Typist

Department of Industrial Relations

9/15/2021

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the morning of September 15, 2021, a Department of Industrial Relations employee gasped out and collapsed in the middle of her office space. The victim's colleagues leapt into action. Senior Legal Typist Karla Castro began chest compressions and administering CPR. Senior Legal Typist Cristi Valencia then took over to administer chest compressions and CPR. Following Ms. Valencia, Senior Legal Typist Camille Morgan took a turn to administer chest compressions and CPR. Additional staff comforted the employee, called the police, and retrieved the AED machine. As paramedics arrived, and after forty harrowing minutes of attempting to rescue the employee, the employee passed away. With no regard for her own safety, Senior Legal Typist Valencia went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Industrial Relations Senior Legal Typist Cristi Valencia

Emilio Valencia

Firefighter II

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/10/2014

Special Service Award (Silver)

On February 10, 2014, at approximately 7:00 p.m. California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Firefighter II Emilio Valencia and another Firefighter were responding to a medical call. While en route, they were advised that the call was a residential structure fire. When the firefighters arrived, the emergency crews on scene told them that someone had run back into the building and they could hear screams for help. Firefighter Valencia could hear the calls for help coming from inside the home, so he put on his safety gear and entered the home alone with the fire hose attack line. The fire was growing in intensity, with heavy fire and smoke moving from the rear of the building towards the front. Because conditions in the home were deteriorating quickly and it was difficult to extend the hose and pull it around objects and walls by himself, Firefighter Valencia decided to continue the search without the hose line. He could hear the cries getting louder as he got closer to the victim. He made his way down a hallway and into a small room where he found a man lying on the ground in a fetal position. Firefighter Valencia reassured the victim he was there to help, but, when he began to pull the man to safety, the man started panicking and resisting his efforts. Exposed to the full heat of the fire and heavy smoke which hampered visibility, Firefighter Valencia managed to maintain control of the struggling victim and pull him out the front door to the lawn. Firefighter Valencia transferred care of the victim to paramedics and began searching for a second victim. After all residents were accounted for, the crew concentrated putting out the fire. The victim was treated for burns and smoke inhalation on scene, transported by ambulance to a landing zone, and then flown by helicopter to a trauma and burn center.

Ivan Valencia

Sergeant

Department of Justice

4/12/2012

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On Apri 12, 2012, responding to reports of shots fired and officers down, Sergeant Ivan Valencia, a ong with ten other officers of the Modesto po ice department, arrived on scene to find Stanislaus Co unty Sheriff's Deputy Bob Paris and civi ian locksmith G endon Engert lying unconscious outside the front door leading to the suspect's apartment front door. Armed with an arsenal, the suspect had barricaded himself inside his apartment and was exchanging fire with a second deputy, Deputy Mike Glinskas, who was pinned down and had issued the call for help. Placing ballistic shields across the front passenger window of a Modesto police car, a group of officers took cover on the driver's side and used the vehicle as mobile cover to advance on the apartment whi e the remaining officers dep oyed a flash bang diversionary device. Their coordinated efforts were successfu and they were ab e to extract Glinskas and escort him to safety and medical attention. They were also able to recover Paris and Engert, both of whom had unfortunately been mortally wounded

After an e even hour standoff, the suspect took his own ife The actions of Sergeant Valencia and his fe ow officers prevented the deadly standoff from esca ating further and thereby threatening more lives.

John Valinch

Class title: Unknown

Employment Development Department

6/30/1986

Special Service Award (Silver)

On June 30, 1986, in the San Francisco Office of the Employment Development Department, unemployment insurance division, employee John Valinch, along with three additional EDD personnel, struggled with an armed gunman, at a great threat to his safety and life, helped manage to disarm the distraught man who was trying to shoot another EDD employee within their vicinity. Mr. Valinch's courage to tackle a highly emotional, potentially explosive individual brandishing a gun put his life in jeopardy. Not only was he instrumental in saving the life of the intended shooting victim, but also prevented the threat of additional injuries or death to all the other employees in the office.

David A. Valle

Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/18/1998

Special Act Award (Gold)

Ca ifornia Highway Patrol Officer David A. Valle, on October 18, 1998, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at risk to his personal safety to save a driver who had been pinned beneath her vehicle in a concrete drainage channel.At approximately 10.35 a m , Ms Denise D'Emido was driving her 1998 Chevro et Si verado southbound on Interstate 215 in the number one traffic lane Ms D'Emido drifted to the left and partially into the center divider. She overcorrected to the right, losing control of the vehic e, and continued traveling across all southbound lanes of traffic. The vehic e overturned and dropped down a 36-foot embankment, coming to rest in a concrete drainage channel. The impact ejected Ms D'Emido out of her vehicle and pinned her beneath it A citizen, Mr Richard Spinner, witnessed the accident and was the first person to reach Ms. D'Emido She was semiconscious with major head and chest injuries. Mr. Spinner held her head out of the small stream of water until Officer Valle arrived on the scene Officer Valle then took over and held Ms. D'Emido's head above the water level The water .eve was rising because the overturned vehicle acted as a dam for the running water in the drainage channel. Ms. D'Emido was pinned at the owest point of the channel, and the water level had increased to approximately two and a half feet. Despite the rising water level, and the potential for the truck to be pushed downstream, Officer Valle bravely maintained his position and kept Ms D'Emido's head above water. As Officer Valle waited for assistance, the 74-gallon tank from Ms D'Emido's vehic e began to leak propane into the area making him dizzy and nauseous from propane inhalation.pproximately ten minutes after Officer Va e arrived, Ms D'Emido was removed from beneath the vehicle by fire and rescue personne She was carried up the embankment with assistance from Officer Valle Officer Valle was also transported and treated at an area hospital for inha ation of the propane.

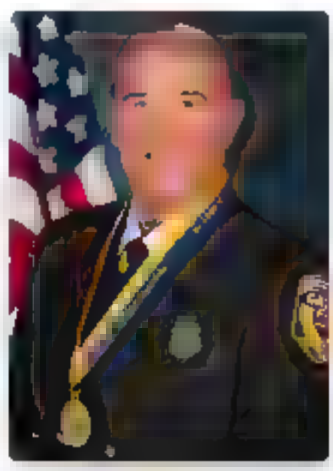
Steven J. Van Heertum

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/7/2016

Special Act Award (Gold)



On June 7, 2016, at 7:50 a.m., Fire Captain Steven Van Heertum's shift ended and he planned to head to the hospital to visit his son. Captain Van Heertum traveled toward Ramona, in rural San Diego County, along a heavily traveled stretch of Highway 78. As he approached a blind corner, he witnessed two vehicles collide head-on and spin away from each other, surrounded by a cloud of dust, smoke, and shattered glass. As the vehicles came to rest on opposite sides of the road, one of the vehicle's engine compartments was engulfed in flames. Captain Van Heertum ran to the driver of the vehicle to find a semi-conscious young man trapped by the crumpled dashboard. Captain Van Heertum ran back to his truck, made an attempt to hail dispatch on his radio, and grabbed his fire extinguisher and his firefighting Nomex jacket. Disregarding his own personal well-being, Captain Van Heertum covered the young man with the jacket and emptied his extinguisher to no avail. At this point, both lanes of traffic had stopped and multiple vehicles were parked in the roadway. Captain Van Heertum ran through the line of vehicles asking for more fire extinguishers. He collected three more extinguishers, and emptied them on the fire but to no avail. Running out of options, he once again ran through the stopped vehicles and located a hydro-seeding vehicle with a small tank and powered pump. He directed the operator to move closer to the scene and turn on the pump. Using the spray nozzle, Captain Van Heertum was able to successfully extinguish the fire. After the flames were out, Captain Van Heertum returned to his vehicle to retrieve his personal medical kit and began to render first aid to the trapped young man until the first fire engines arrived. He remained with the young survivor to continue his care through the extrication process. The young man is alive today, due to Captain Van Heertum's efforts. The victim was flown by medical helicopter to the University of California at San Diego where he spent two months recovering from major abdominal injuries, the loss of the lower portion of his right leg, and burns that covered 14 percent of his body. Although Captain Van Heertum suffered multiple abrasions to his left arm and multiple burns to his right forearm and hand, he initially refused treatment. His priority was still not himself, he needed to see his son.

Kirk Van Orsdel

Sergeant

California Highway Patrol

7/21/2005

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Sergeant Kirk Van Orsde , on July 21, 2005 performed an act of heroism at risk to his personal safety by apprehending a violent crimina , and saving the lives of several people. At approximate y 7 43 a.m., in an unincorporated area of Riverside County, Sergeant Kirk Van Orsdel observed a vehicle that may have been involved in a freeway vio ence confrontation. Contact with the vehic e resu ted in the suspect firing upon the officer with a high powered, fully automatic AK-47 assault rifle The suspect entered the freeway with Sergeant Van Orsdel in pursuit The suspect stopped on the freeway, and both engaged in a second exchange of gunfire. The suspect traveled the wrong way on the freeway as Sergeant Van Orsdel followed in reverse As the suspect entered the city streets he observed his intended female victim who ran to a Shell gas/Mini store station for cover The market manager locked the doors after the female victim entered the store, with 20 innocent parties. The suspect was not able to follow the fema e victim into the store because Sergeant Van Orsde was approaching the suspect's location However, a round was ocated in the gas pump near the front door of the store indicating the suspect fired at the fleeing victim The suspect was lying in wait, uti izing the cement rail for cover and engaged Sergeant Van Ordsdel in a third exchange of gunfire. The Sergeant responded to the attack and returned fire upon the assailant. After the heated exchange of gunfire, the suspect re-entered his vehicle and the pursuit continued west at 100 miles per hour. After engaging the suspect three times prior in combat shootings, Sergeant Van Orsdel confronted the suspect at a final location. The suspect exited his vehicle and suddenly fired upon the patrol vehicle, trapping the sergeant inside with automatic weapon fire Sergeant Van Orsde ay across the seat to avoid being shot, but received a superficial wound in the arm and sustained cuts to his face and scalp from exp oding glass. As the suspect's vehic e ro ed back, the suspect walked a ong the vehicle for cover and popped over the hood of the rolling vehicle to fire upon the sergeant. Down to his last seven rounds in his handgun, Sergeant Van Orsde immediate y started to fire upon the suspect with his H-bar rifle to allow himself the abi ity to exit the patrol vehicle and engaged the suspect in battle. In this exchange of gunfire, the suspect was incapacitated The sergeant's actions during continued pursuits and engagement in numerous battles with an extremely dangerous individual were responsible for saving the lives of people within the store, as wel as his original victim.

Michael Van Pelt

State Park Peace Officer

Department of Parks and Recreation

7/26/2018

Special Service Award (Silver)

On the morning of July 26, 2018, Officers Michael Van Pelt and Mark Hofer responded to the Carr Fire to ensure no one was trapped on or around Whiskey Town Lake. The officers were also tasked with preventing the loss of any more lake vessels and with supporting other fire suppression activities. Most of the areas where the officers were working were isolated and unreachable by fire trucks or air support. The officers towed their trailer and patrol boat to the lake to launch it, but, with the boat's high clearance, downed power lines and trees, and fire on all sides, they had difficulty getting through. Eventually, they were able to launch their patrol boat, which was equipped with fire hoses and firefighting equipment, and spent a long day doing fire suppression activity on the lake. At about 7 p.m., the fire activity was getting increasingly dangerous, so they were ordered off the lake. As other officers tried to get the rangers out, there was a fire pattern known as a "fire tornado" that had never been seen before. Fire kept crossing their path and was all around the officers, who had to figure out new routes and improvise to get out of the area. Officer Hofer later showed other rangers a video of the flames touching the vessel. Public Safety Chief Aaron Wright asked him what made him think to record the evacuation, and he said, "I thought we were going to die and I wanted it recorded." The two officers went back early the next day on the same assignment, with the fire still extremely active. This time their patrol boat broke down on the water, likely due to heat damage from the day before. With no one able to get to them, little to no radio communication because the tower burned down, and fire on all sides, Officers Van Pelt and Hofer had to figure out how to get out to safety. Being resourceful, they used their fire suppression hose as a propulsion system to get back to shore. Officer Van Pelt worked several days on the Vessel Task Force, a 24-hour detail that was so successful, the task force was asked to follow the front lines of the fire from Whiskey Town Lake to Trinity Lake and then Shasta Lake. The task force went from one vessel to eight vessels from multiple agencies working together by the end. They assisted with fire suppression activities, provided medical support to line staff, performed emergency evacuations, transported more than 3,500 firefighters to the front lines, and acted as scouts for the other units that were fighting the fire. Officer Van Pelt's actions helped save lives during the Carr Fire in Shasta and Trinity Counties. The fire, one of the largest in California history, started on July 23, 2018, and burned more than 229,000 acres. It took three lives and destroyed almost 2,000 structures. His work required long days in terrible conditions that were mentally and physically draining, yet he represented California with professionalism and courage during all of the chaos and danger. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Van Pelt went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Parks and Recreation State Park Peace Officer Michael Van Pelt.

Byron Vance

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/26/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 26, 2018, during the Carr Fire, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Captain Byron Vance was a helicopter coordinator trainee. Flying along with him in the helicopter was California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Battalion Chief Erich Schwab, helicopter coordinator. They responded to a radio report from Bulldozer Operator Don Smith advising that he was cut off by fire. They directed a series of coordinated water drops by multiple helicopters on Operator Smith's last known location. Recognizing the severity of the situation, their own helicopter maneuvered through extreme weather conditions until they were able to see Operator Smith's location. They maintained visual contact with the area and provided updates and direction to ground and air resources until the scene was stabilized. A short time later, Captain Vance and Chief Schwab noted deteriorating weather conditions, increased fire activity and a large vortex of smoke and flame. In an effort to support evacuations already in progress, Chief Schwab directed another helicopter to maintain routes of travel for the evacuees with water drops. In the course of that assignment, the helicopter reported two occupied vehicles trapped by fire at the end of a driveway near the Sacramento River. Chief Schwab ordered the helicopter to drop its bucket and land to aid the people who were trapped in their vehicles while directing his own helicopter to do the same. Upon landing, Chief Schwab told Captain Vance to make contact with one of the vehicles while the other helicopter crew assisted the occupants of the second vehicle. Captain Vance ran about a quarter mile from the helicopter landing zone to the endangered vehicle. There was an elderly couple with debilitating medical conditions inside the vehicle attempting to escape the oncoming flames. Captain Vance took control of the vehicle and drove back to the helicopter. Captain Vance and Chief Schwab helped load the couple into the helicopter and flew them to safety. Once the couple were safe at a nearby landing zone, Captain Vance and Chief Schwab returned to their assignment. With no regard for his own safety, Captain Vance went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Battalion Chief Byron Vance.

Darrell L. VanNatta

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

12/28/2022

Special Service Award (Silver)

On December 28, 2022, surrounded by mountainous terrain and steep drop-offs, Equipment Operator II Ken Myers was patrolling his area in the Sierras on eastbound I-80 between Drum Forebay Road and Blue Canyon when he spotted smoke just above the exit. Mr. Myers immediately responded to the location and found a vehicle on fire. Five of the six passengers were outside of the car. Some were wandering around while the others were lying on the ground, bloodied and injured. One was almost scalped with severe cuts on his head. With a language barrier impacting communication, Mr. Myers went directly to the door of the vehicle and found the driver trapped and semi-conscious. Flames were quickly rising around and under the vehicle's hood and dash. He hastily grabbed a fire extinguisher from his truck and set to work on putting the flames out. Shortly after, colleagues Equipment Operator II Darrell VanNatta and Bruce Perry arrived on the scene to assist in battling the fire. Their combined efforts kept the fire at bay long enough to allow CAL FIRE to arrive and extinguish the fire before cutting the injured driver out of the car. The heroic acts of the three Caltrans employees—jumping into harm's way, approaching the burning car and extinguishing flames while not knowing if the car would explode—were remarkable. This quick action from a trio of Whitmore Maintenance crew members is credited for saving the life of the driver. A Placer County Fire Department Captain stated that he believes with 100 percent certainty that if the Caltrans employees were not there providing lifesaving efforts, the driver of the vehicle would have perished or suffered life-altering burn injuries. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Department of Transportation, Caltrans Equipment Operator II Darrell VanNatta for his heroic service extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Tom Vanzwol

Caltrans Equipment Operator

Department of Transportation

2/7/1994

Special Act Award (Gold)

On February 7, 1994, at approximately 8:50 a.m., Mr. VanZwol was traveling on I-580 when he arrived at an accident involving two vehicles. One of the vehicles was stalled in the interior number three lane of five lanes. This was an extremely dangerous location with traffic having to pass the motorist on each side. Mr. VanZwol decided to protect the motorist by using his Caltrans truck as a barrier behind the vehicle. Mr. VanZwol maneuvered his truck into position, raised and activated the sequential arrow board which directed traffic to the left and right around the stalled vehicle. He then called the California Highway Patrol for assistance. Mr. VanZwol was observing traffic through his side-view mirrors when all of a sudden he saw a tractor/trailer rig approaching his truck at a high rate of speed. He knew instantly impact was imminent. He was wearing all the required safety equipment and took action by grabbing the steering wheel firmly, jamming on the foot brake, and bracing his head. His truck was subsequently hit by the rig and he received a serious back injury due to the size, the weight and the speed of the errant vehicle. The CHP Officer indicated that the rig driver's brakes were not applied. In the final analysis, the motorist's survival was solely dependent upon Mr. VanZwol's discretionary action.

Pedro Vasquez

Caltrans Equipment Operator I

Department of Transportation

6/24/2010

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 24, 2010 at approximately 2:00 p.m. Caltrans employees Arthur Grijalva, Tommy Neri, Pedro Vasquez, Pablo Diaz, and Leonardo Necochea were traveling on Interstate 8 in the Jacumba area of San Diego County when they came upon an accident. A van had overturned in the median and landed upright on its wheels starting a small brush fire. Mr. Neri and Mr. Necochea rushed to the vehicle and found an unconscious woman in the driver's seat. Mr. Diaz and Mr. Vasquez quickly began attempts to extinguish the fire. In an effort to prevent additional traffic collisions, Mr. Grijalva began directing traffic. While Mr. Neri and Mr. Necochea were administering first aid, they noticed the fire was getting out of control and approaching the vehicle. With the help of Mr. Diaz and Mr. Vasquez, they rigged a backboard from a portion of the wrecked vehicle, cut the woman's seatbelt, placed her on the backboard, and safely removed her from the vehicle to a secure location. Within minutes after removing the woman, the vehicle went up in flames. Mr. Neri and Mr. Necochea stayed with the woman and provided additional first aid while the others began assisting Mr. Grijalva with traffic control until help arrived. The actions of the Caltrans employees, without regard for their own safety, saved the woman's life. The State of California takes great pride in presenting Arthur Grijalva this Silver Medal of Valor, and Tommy Neri, Pablo Diaz, Leonardo Necochea, and Pedro Vasquez these Gold Medals of Valor, for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the call of duty.

Stephen Vaughn

Fire Apparatus Engineer

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

12/22/1982

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 22, 1982 at 10:30 a.m., Fire Apparatus Engineer Steve Vaughn received a call from the Emergency Command Center about the impending catastrophe that Diana Hill and the four children (Brenda Hill, age 5; Joshua Hill, age 4; Cassandra Nagy, age 10 and Anthony Nagy) had encountered when their pickup truck became stuck in Lopez Canyon Creek (San Louis Obispo) on their way to a Christmas shopping trip. It was raining. The high swift water was rising and rushing rapidly. The pickup truck was pushed downstream by the strong current when Ms. Hill attempted to cross the creek. At this juncture, Diana Hill and the oldest boy Anthony Nagy tied a rope to the bumper and waded 20 feet to the bank. Ms. Hill planned to have the boy hold the rope on the bank while she ferried the youngest children to safety, but was unsuccessful. The rising water was too much for her. While they were standing in the downpour on the opposite bank, the three children were trapped inside the pickup with a camper shell in the middle of Lopez Canyon Creek. Fire Apparatus Engineer Steve Vaughn, with the help of Ted Greenwater and Brian Feuer (both county employees), extended a 24-foot ladder from a tree on shore to the passenger window of the pickup truck. With a safety line around his waist, Engineer Vaughn made his way across the slippery ladder to the truck. Moments later, the ladder was snapped and broken by the force of the water and weight of debris that logged behind it, leaving Engineer Vaughn and the children stranded on the truck. Firefighter Feuer backed the fire truck into the raging water as far as he could to the pickup. He was able to extend another ladder from the fire truck to the pickup so that the children and Engineer Vaughn were able to climb across to shore and safety.

Jonathan Veale

Santa Barbara County Fire Department

Other

8/23/2003

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On August 23, 2003 at 13:56 hrs. Santa Barbara County Fire Engine 31 responded with mutual aid units to a report of a brush fire in Cebada Canyon near the historic La Purisima Mission. Firefighter Veale received several electrical shocks in the process of pulling a fellow firefighter off an 8,000 volt power line

Brock Veillette

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

4/18/2015

Special Service Award (Silver)

On April 18, 2015, at 1:50 a.m., Officer Brock Veillette and his partner Officer Andrew Lamar received a radio transmission from California Highway Patrol Dispatch of a traffic collision with reported injuries at the Williams Hill recreation area, in an unincorporated area of Monterey County. Upon their arrival at 3:23 a.m., Officer Veillette and his partner were unable to see any victims, but could hear cries for help down the hillside. At great risk to their own safety, Officer Veillette and his partner decided to descend the hillside through the darkness to assess and treat the injured victims. Both officers slid down the steep hillside headfirst on their stomachs through areas that, if not navigated correctly, could have resulted in serious injury or death to both officers. During their descent, the officers were unable to continuously hold their flashlights because their hands were occupied with balancing themselves or grabbing onto objects they could utilize to prevent them from sliding uncontrollably down the hillside. During the officers' descent, Coastal Division Helicopter 70 arrived on scene and assisted them with locating the injured victims. Approximately 50 feet down the hillside from the roadway, Officer Veillette encountered one deceased passenger from the vehicle. Approximately 250 feet further down the hillside, Officer Veillette encountered a passenger who sustained major injuries to his leg and head. As Officer Veillette continued down the steep hillside, he sustained abrasions to his forearms from crawling through the brush in the prone position. Approximately 25 feet further down the hillside from the injured passenger, Officer Veillette located two more people, who were suffering from major spine and head trauma. Cal-Fire Paramedic David Sutherland arrived at Officer Veillette's location and took over patient care of the two.

Officer Veillette could hear a faint call for help further down the hillside. Officer Veillette crawled for approximately 75 feet and located yet another person, who was suffering from head and spinal trauma. Officer Veillette began treatment, and was assisted by American Medical Response Paramedic Chris Otherson. Officer Veillette, Officer Lamar, Paramedic Otherson, and Paramedic Sutherland remained with the four patients for an additional four hours until Mercy Air Helicopter 20 and Coastal Division Helicopter 70 returned to evacuate the injured parties. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Veillette's heroic service helped to save the lives of four traffic collision victims trapped on a steep hillside. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Brock Veillette

Merna Velasco

Motor Vehicle Representative

Department of Motor Vehicles

3/9/2010

Special Service Award (Silver)

Shortly before noon on March 9, 2010, 70 customers were in the lobby of the Hanford DMV office, when a man came in, walked straight toward the testing area, and began shouting profanities at a young man. He was yelling, "You disrespected me!" and then started hitting the young man with his fists. Several people in the testing area ran away from the irate man, except for an elderly lady who was too scared to move. The young man did not fight back, but did attempt to protect himself. People in the office were yelling at the man to stop. However, he ignored them and continued to hit the young man with closed fists. He then began to slam the young man's head on the edge of the counter repeatedly, causing blood to splatter onto the wall, floor and counters. While no one stepped in to help the young man or make any attempt to stop the violence, fearing for the young man's life, Motor Vehicle Field Representative, Merna Velasco, jumped over the handicapped counter, ran up to the man, shouted "STOP", grabbed his arm and held it until he stopped beating the young man. The man then ran out of the office and was arrested soon after. Ms. Velasco's actions, without regard for her personal safety, prevented further serious injury and possibly death to this young victim. The State of California takes great pride in presenting to Merna Velasco, this Silver Medal of Valor for her extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Mike Velasquez

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/18/1987

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 18, 1987, at approximately 2:20 p.m., Fire Captains Ken Eller and Mike Velasquez observed smoke half a mile south of the Piedra Forest Fire Station. Upon arrival, they found the trunk portion of a vehicle on fire and a grass fire around the vehicle. They were unable to see the driver due to the fire and smoke. Hearing cries, Fire Captains Eller and Velasquez braved the flames without protective gear and approached the vehicle. While Fire Captain Velasquez worked to free the driver's trapped leg, Captain Eller covered her face with protective clothing. Within a few minutes they were able to extricate her from the burning vehicle and after moving her to safety, administered basic life support.

Lance J. Velez

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/10/1990

Special Act Award (Gold)

At approximately 4 50 p.m. while on patrol in the vicinity of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks, in the unincorporated area of San Lorenzo, Officer Velez was notified by several citizens standing near the railroad tracks of a suicidal suspect standing between the Union Pacific tracks and the Bay Area Rapid Transit tracks. Officer Velez drove his patrol vehicle approximately 500 feet north of Lewelling Boulevard, where he observed a young man trying to climb a raised concrete structure with an attached wire fence that borders the B.A.R.T. tracks. A friend of the suspect, who had solicited the aid of another citizen, was standing nearby. The friend and citizen advised Officer Velez that the young man was intending to commit suicide Officer Velez returned to his patrol car and notified dispatch of the situation and followed the suspect as he continued for several hundred feet. Officer Velez again stopped his patrol car with its right side 5 ½ feet from the nearest rail and exited. As Officer Velez exited his vehicle and approached the young man he noticed a freight train approaching from the south at a distance of ¼ mile Officer Velez engaged the young man in conversation, grasped him, and then walked west, across the tracks, ahead of the patrol car toward its left side As the freight train neared the patrol car a struggle ensured as the young man attempted to break free from Officer Velez and make his way into the path of the train Officer Velez grabbed the young man around the waist with one arm and the patrol car's push bumper with his other arm in an effort to keep the man from reaching the train. As the train began to pass, the young man began to break free from the officer's hold. Without regard for his own safety, Officer Velez released his grip from the patrol car's push bumper, and moving in the direction of the train, threw himself onto the young man's back Falling to the ground with Officer Velez on top of the suspect, and both of their heads laying approximately 6 inches from the passing train. Officer Velez continued to hold the man as he struggled for approximately 30 seconds until the train passed. Shortly thereafter, officers from Oakland Police Department arrived and took the young man in custody. Officer Velez' determination and tenacity, and with great risk to his personal safety, managed to stop the multiple attempts by the suicidal man to jump in front of an oncoming freight train and saved the victim's life

Luciano Venegas

Mailing Machine Operator

Department of Community Services and Development

10/12/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 12, 2007, Luciano Venegas was off-duty from his State job and working in the stock room of a family-owned store when he heard the store clerk scream for help. Mr. Venegas, who is licensed to carry a gun, immediately drew his weapon and proceeded toward the front of the store. An armed, masked man had come in and was demanding money from the clerk. When the clerk saw his gun, she panicked, screamed, and ran toward the stock room. The robber ran after her. When the robber saw Mr. Venegas, he began moving toward him with his gun pointed at him. Mr. Venegas fired three shots at the suspect, who fell to the ground. The robber, who was still holding his gun, staggered to get up, and Mr. Venegas fired his gun two more times. The suspect stumbled, turned, and ran out through the stock room door as Mr. Venegas fired one last shot. The still armed robber continued running toward the store's exit but dropped his gun on the floor as he ran out of the store. The robber was later apprehended by law enforcement officials and found to be a convicted felon. He was charged with attempted robbery and felony assault with a deadly weapon. Both the store clerk and Mr. Venegas were badly shaken, but unharmed. Mr. Venegas' actions in the face of immediate and life-threatening danger were responsible for preventing serious harm or death to his co-worker and himself.

Hector Villarreal

Correctional Sergeant

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

1/8/2018

Special Act Award (Gold)

On January 8, 2018, at 11:00 p.m., California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctional Sergeant Hector Villarreal of Pleasant Valley State Prison was driving with his family through Kerman, California when a Chevrolet Silverado pulled alongside them. The other driver brandished a black semi-automatic firearm at Sergeant Villarreal and his family. Officer Villarreal shouted for his family to get down in their seats as he made several attempts to steer away from the other vehicle. The gunman pursued, staying on the family's tail. Realizing that the gunman was not going to stop following them, Sergeant Villarreal pulled into a gas station and parked his vehicle in a safe location. He told his family to stay in the vehicle and call the police. In an attempt to draw the gunman away from his family, Sergeant Villarreal un-holstered his off-duty weapon and shouted at two people getting gas to seek shelter and call the police. Sergeant Villarreal took cover and called the Kerman Police Department while keeping an eye on the gunman, who remained in his vehicle parked near the gas pumps. Local police arrived and Sergeant Villarreal updated them on the situation. Kerman police officers surrounded the suspect's vehicle with weapons drawn and Sergeant Villarreal alongside them. The suspect was placed into handcuffs while other responding law enforcement officers provided coverage. A search of the suspect's vehicle revealed a .380 semi-automatic handgun and methamphetamine. The suspect was taken into custody on firearm and drug possession charges, as well as an outstanding warrant for driving on a suspended license. Further investigation by the Fresno Sheriff's Forensic Laboratory team revealed the suspect's weapon matched the bullets recovered from a shooting spree in five different locations in the Kerman area between November 27 and December 17, 2017. The shootings left one person with shrapnel wounds from broken glass. With no regard for his own safety, Sergeant Villarreal went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Correctional Sergeant Hector Villarreal

Joseph A. Voelkle

Officer

California Highway Patrol

10/8/1969

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 1 45 a m Officer Joseph A Voe k e was off duty and in a nearly restaurant near the Santa Ana freeway when he heard a citizen mention there was a traffic collision on the freeway. He climbed a freeway fence and rushed to the scene. As flames licked six to eight feet into the air Officer Voe k e strugg ed atop the overturned vehicle, a camper. He could make out a figure, c othing afire, inside. Officer Voe k e strained against the door but it wouldn't budge. By now the cab was engulfed in flames. Officer Voe k e jumped to the ground and attempted to open the rear door of the camper, but it was also jammed. The flames then became so intense that he was forced to abandon his efforts to get into the vehic e Unfortunately both occupants perished. Officer Voe k e suffered second degree burns on both hands

Christopher K. Wagner

Investigator

Department of Motor Vehicles

1/29/2008

Special Service Award (Silver)

On January 29, 2008, at approximately 2:30 p.m., California Department of Motor Vehicles Investigator Christopher Wagner was working a special undercover assignment with the Help Eliminate Auto Theft (also known as HEAT) task force in a high crime area of Fresno. Mr. Wagner was partnered with a CHP Officer in an unmarked vehicle driving east on Shaw Avenue when the officer recognized the driver of a van traveling in the same direction. The man was wanted for drug violations and was considered to be armed and dangerous. They followed the van, which carried the suspect and three passengers, and called Fresno Police for back-up. The suspect saw he was being followed and began driving erratically. After several blocks, the van pulled into a department store parking lot and parked. The officer and Mr. Wagner pulled in behind the van. Mr. Wagner approached the passenger side, while the officer approached the driver who exited the van. There was a verbal confrontation and the suspect re-entered the van in spite of repeated commands to stop. Fearing the suspect would flee, the officer began to scuffle with him. The suspect then pulled a ten-inch, double-edged knife from his jacket and began swinging in a stabbing motion at the officer. While swinging the knife, the suspect was able to start the van and put it in drive. The van's forward motion caught the officer off balance causing him to fall to his knees. The officer called out to Mr. Wagner, who was questioning the van's other passenger for possible narcotics violations. Mr. Wagner ran to the driver's side of the van to help his partner who was on his knees fighting and struggling with the armed suspect. The suspect then turned the vehicle tires out and put the van in reverse toward the CHP officer. Mr. Wagner recognized the imminent threat to his partner and fired three shots from his firearm, critically wounding the suspect. Mr. Wagner was then able to assist his partner and request additional back-up assistance.

Investigator Wagner's quick reaction saved his partner from serious bodily injury or possible death.

Eric Walbergh

State Park Ranger

Department of Parks and Recreation

4/1/1977

Special Act Award (Gold)

On April 1, 1977, State Park Ranger Eric Walbergh responded to a traffic accident report on Highway 1 at Point Mugu Rock in Ventura County. When he arrived, he saw a vehicle had gone over a 40-foot cliff and was being pounded into the rocks by the heavy surf. Ranger Walbergh grabbed an ax and pry bar from his vehicle before descending the cliff with a Sheriff's deputy. He and deputy entered the surf and with the assistance of four other people, attempted to rescue a person trapped in the vehicle. Ocean waves continually washed over the vehicle, bouncing it around the rocks and knocking the rescuers down. When Ranger Walbergh realized the doors were jammed and they might not be able to complete the rescue, he began chopping away at the metal holding the door hinge. Through a combined effort and working under extremely hazardous conditions, the six men completed the rescue using the door that Ranger Walbergh had loosened

Kelley Walker

Officer

California Highway Patrol

11/3/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On November 3, 2007, at approximately 1:30 a.m., California Highway Patrol Officers Kelley Walker and Aaron Taylor responded to a call of an injury accident on westbound State Route 178 in Bakersfield. Upon arrival, they found an overturned car on fire with two citizens attempting to rescue a man trapped inside. While the intensity of the heat forced the citizens away from the car, Officers Taylor and Walker approached the car, grabbed the man's legs and dragged him to a safe area, just as multiple small explosions began to fully engulf the car. While removing the man, Officers Taylor and Walker saw that his head, right arm, and torso were on fire. One of the citizens attempted to extinguish the flames with a shirt, which Officer Walker subsequently used to smother the fire. But the man's body reignited, so Officer Walker used bottled water to put out the flames. Officers Walker and Taylor triaged the man's burns and provided first aid to two other occupants of the vehicle, including the driver, who had been ejected during the roll-over accident. Due to the heroic efforts of Officers Taylor and Walker, the man survived despite severe burns to his head and upper torso. The two occupants were treated at a medical center and released; the driver was taken into custody for driving under the influence.

Robert W. Walker

Officer

California Highway Patrol

11/22/1958

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 11 30 pm, while on patrol, Officer Robert W. Walker observed flames shooting into the air in the rura residentia area north of Hayward. Officer Walker promptly requested assistance from the fire department and drove to the scene. As Officers Walker and Bieser arrived at the scene, they saw a man carrying an eleven year old girl from the bu ding The man, a neighbor, informed them that another chi d and the mother were still in the bedroom of the burning house. Without regard to his persona safety, Officer Walker climbed into the bedroom through the open window in spite of the fact the roof was in danger of co apsing Groping his way through the smoke, Officer Walker determined that the woman was not in the building. He found the child, a two year old boy either as eep or unconscious, brought him to the window and passed him to his partner. Oxygen was administered and the boy survived the ordeal At the time Officer Walker entered the building, a merchant's patro man and another citizen had been driven back by the smoke and flames.

Rodney Walker

Maintenance Supervisor

Department of Transportation

1/29/2016

Special Service Award (Silver)

On January 29, 2016, at 4:05 p.m. it was very wet and rainy, when a pickup truck struck a guardrail on westbound I-80, left the roadway, overturned and rolled down the steep embankment, landing upside down in Canyon Creek below. While the driver was able to get out, the female passenger was trapped inside. A Caltrans sand truck saw the incident and put out a call for help. Caltrans Equipment Operator II James Anderson was nearby and arrived at the scene. Along with California Highway Patrol officers Andy Murri and Kevin Manford, he went into the freezing waters of Canyon Creek to reach the trapped passenger. Then Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor Rodney Walker arrived on the scene and, along with Caltrans Equipment Operator II Kenneth Myers, climbed down the steep embankment to provide assistance. Mr. Myers was able to prevent Mr. Anderson and the officers from being swept downstream when Mr. Anderson lost his footing as they were carrying the injured woman back across the rushing creek. However, the creek's steep bank made getting the injured passenger out of the water very difficult, particularly for the three rescuers who had been in freezing water for over 15 minutes. Mr. Walker was able to provide the additional leverage and strength required to lift the panicked woman out of the water, and ensure she got up the very steep embankment to safety and medical attention.

Ryan Wallace

Fire Captain Specialist/Law Enforcement

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/19/2021

Special Act Award (Gold)

On February 19, 2021, at approximately 10:30 a.m., law enforcement received reports of "shots fired" at a gas station in the community of Three Rivers, Tulare County. Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Officers Ryan Wallace and Tom Crass responded to the scene. They spotted a vehicle matching that of the suspected shooter and initiated a traffic stop. Once stopped, the suspect began to shoot at the officers. The officers returned fire as the suspect drove off. Officers Wallace and Crass immediately pursued the suspect. Multiple law enforcement officers also joined in the pursuit. The suspect drove head-on into highway traffic, recklessly shooting at officers. The suspect drove into an orchard, crashing into several trees, before fleeing on foot. While a perimeter was being established, additional shots were heard near the suspect's crashed vehicle. Both officers discovered a California Highway Patrol officer had been ambushed and shot. Placing themselves between the downed officer, and the suspect a few rows of trees away, a gun fight ensued. Once the suspect became incapacitated and taken into custody, Officers Wallace and Crass began to administer care to the injured CHP officer until transported via helicopter to a trauma center. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Wallace went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Officer Ryan Wallace.

Evan S. Walter

State Park Peace Officer/Ranger

Department of Parks and Recreation

11/1/2012

Special Service Award (Silver)

On November 1, 2012, at approximately 5:40 p.m., State Park Peace Officer/Ranger Evan S. Walter was off duty and attending to personal business at the Chico Mall when he saw a group of possible gang members assembling in front of the mall. Ranger Walter was wary, there had been recent news from the Chico Police Gang Unit about an increase in gang activity and violence in Chico and surrounding areas. Suddenly, two young men started fighting and one repeatedly stabbed the other in the back and side-ribcage. Ranger Walter drew his off duty weapon and intervened, securing the knife, handcuffing the suspect, and holding him until the police arrived. The victim, a 15 year, was transported by ambulance to the local hospital in serious condition. The investigation revealed that two rival local gangs got into a verbal altercation at the mall. The gang member responsible for the stabbing was arrested for attempted murder, as well as committing a crime while participating in a criminal street gang. The victim survived

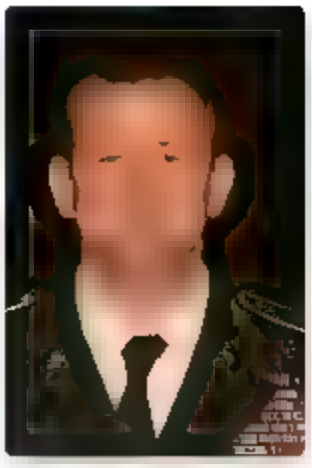
Rob Walters

Staff Sergeant

California Army National Guard

5/26/2008

Special Service Award (Silver)



At approximate y 8 30 pm on June 26, 2008, Army Nationa Guard personnel were preparing to conduct a short, Night Vision Goggle he icopter training mission in the Sacramento vicinity, when the ca came in requesting support in a 10,000 foot rescue mission in the John Muir Wilderness. Earlier that day, a Boy Scout troop was crossing a stream in the remote Wilson Lake area of eastern Fresno County, when a 10 ton bou der rolled and trapped a fourteen-year-old boy's leg between it and another bou der Most of the crew assemb ed by Officer Weatherhead for the p anned short training mission had already been on duty almost 12 hours. This mission wou d be challenging because the altitude for the rescue was at 10,000 feet which provided a reduced power capability, smoke from a nearby fire restricted visibi ity, the crew was starting the mission at a time they wou d norma y be going home, and the darkness required use of Night Vision Goggles. In spite of al of this, the crew agreed to the mission and immediately began planning. The he icopter crew departed Mather at 10:10 pm and arrived at the Fresno airport at 11 20 pm where they picked up a CAL FIRE rescue emp oyee and equipment. At 12 35 am, the crew departed Fresno under Night Vision Goggles. They located the victim, conducted a recon of the landing zone and landed at approximately 1:15 am Whi e Officer Weatherhead stayed with the aircraft, the remainder of the crew, carrying the rescue equipment and using only head lamps and compasses, set out under tota darkness through treacherously steep rocky terrain to find the Boy Scout After near y three hours of rescue efforts, they were ab e to move the 10 ton bou der enough to free the boy's eg They administered medical aid and carried the boy for more than an hour back to the helicopter. After being awake for 24 hours, the crew arrived at the Fresno airport at approximately 6.10 am and the Boy Scout was then transported to the hospital. The crew's actions, without regard for their persona safety, saved this young boy's life The State of California takes great pride in presenting Chief Warrant Officer Three Randall Weatherhead, Chief Warrant Officer Two Co e Gould, Sergeant First Class Kelly Hughes, and Staff Sergeant Rob Walters, these Silver Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Joseph Walton

Fire Apparatus Engineer

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

3/31/2012

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 31, 2012, at approximately 4:00 p.m. Fire Apparatus Engineer Joseph Walton was off duty and at home in Paradise when he heard someone screaming for he p. He and his mother-in-law ran toward the cries and saw three pit bulls viciously attacking his fema e neighbor. The pit bulls had jumped over a nearby fence and attacked the woman as she was bringing in her garbage can, dragging her to the ground and biting her repeatedly, one going for her throat whi e the other two were biting her arms. Engineer Walton pulled the dog going for her throat off of her and threw him to the side He then pushed the other two dogs away He confirmed 911 was called and pulled the woman further away from the dogs so he and his mother-in-law could administer medical care. The aggressive dogs circled back repeatedly, and Engineer Walton and other neighbors fought them off with sticks and even their bare hands. Another neighbor was bitten in the arm The woman was transported to a Trauma Center with severe injuries She underwent mu tip e surgeries and skin grafts, but survived the ordeal.

Dan Ward

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/18/1984

Special Act Award (Gold)

Fire Captains Dan Ward, John Robbins and Dave Harden, on July 18, 1984, performed extraordinary acts of heroism at great risk to their own personal safety and lives while rescuing a volunteer fireman who had fallen down a 35-foot embankment into an uncovered mine shaft while fighting a wildland fire on Carson Hill in Calaveras County. At approximately 12:09 am these men responded to and emergency call that a man was in a mine shaft. Despite burning debris and rocks falling into the shaft, Captain Harden rappelled down the dark, smoke-filled shaft to the victim 50 feet below, who was clinging to a fingerhold crevice in total darkness. Although Captain Harden was able to get a line around the victim, he began to slip further down the shaft of unknown depth. Captain Harden grabbed the victim's hand and yelled for assistance. Fire Captain Robbins, wearing a headlamp, rappelled down the shaft and, after considerable effort, the two men were able to lower the victim to the bottom of the shaft. Fire Captain Ward had also joined the rescue effort and was located some 20 feet down the shaft where he could act as a communication and equipment relay. Despite extremely hazardous conditions caused by smoke and falling debris, these men protected the victim until rigging could be set up to remove the severely injured fireman, almost three hours after he had fallen into the shaft. Because of their prolonged stay in the mine shaft, Fire Captains Harden, Robbins and Ward suffered from smoke inhalation, exhaustion, stress and hypothermia, requiring medical treatment.

Walter Wardle, Jr.

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/23/1989

Special Act Award (Gold)

While off duty, Officer Walter Wardle Jr encountered a three vehicle collision in Vallejo involving a tractor-trailer, a pickup truck and a small car. The small car had been pushed into a pole and was burning by the time Officer Wardle reached the scene. A bystander motioned to Officer Wardle that someone was still inside the car. Officer Wardle attempted to open the doors and remove the dazed driver, but the doors were jammed. He was finally able to pull the driver through the passenger's window just as the vehicle exploded.

Richard H. Washabaugh

Officer

California Highway Patrol

2/20/2000

Special Act Award (Gold)

On February 2, 2000, At approximately 12:30 a.m., California Highway Patrol Officer Richard H Washabaugh performed an extraordinary act of heroism at risk to his personal safety when he entered a burning home and attempted to rescue an elderly gentleman who was trapped inside. Officer Washabaugh and his partner responded to a report of a fire at a home near their location in the City of Placerville. When the officers arrived, they found the home almost engulfed in flames. A nearby resident informed them an elderly man was in the house and his bedroom was located on the first floor near the back of the house. Officer Washabaugh ran around to the back of the house looking for a safe entry point near the bedroom. As flames were well established there, he chose not to enter from the back. Accompanied by two Placerville Police Department officers, Officer Washabaugh entered the home crawling on his stomach, remaining in contact with the other officers in case any problems arose. The flames and smoke forced the officers to retreat outside and attempt entry from another outside door. Inside the front bedroom, the heat and smoke from the fire were so intense, Officer Washabaugh was forced to pull sheets off the bed to determine if someone was on the bed. This proved negative, and a further search of the room, including closets, was conducted. This too proved negative. By this time the fire had progressed, forcing the officers to retreat and abandon any subsequent attempts to search the home. The El Dorado County Fire Department arrived and assumed fire suppression duties. After approximately 20 minutes, the fire was contained enough to allow firefighters to enter the building, at which time the body of the lone resident was discovered in the back bedroom. The investigation by the fire department revealed the resident had recently purchased a space heater and had placed it in his bedroom near flammable material, which, apparently, ignited the fire. Although the rescue attempt by Officer Washabaugh and the other officers was unsuccessful, it is evident that every possible effort was made, at the risk of their own safety

Joseph W. Waterman

Battalion Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

7/26/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Battalion Chief Joseph W. Waterman, Fire Captain Tena G. Anderson and Heavy Fire Equipment Operator (HFEO) Fredrick Westrip performed an act of heroism at risk to their own personal safety during the Straylor Fire in Butte County when they aided in the successful rescue and evacuation of three individuals from a downed Jet Ranger helicopter. On July 26, 2004, the helicopter was surveying the area to provide spot fire reports. The helicopter crashed in an area threatened by a rapidly growing spot fire. The fire continued to grow steadily as it neared the downed craft with occupants trapped inside. Upon reaching the downed helicopter, which had crashed in a steep terrain and brush area, Battalion Chief Waterman instructed and assisted additional firefighters on the scene to fall trees in the clearing to create a landing zone for a helicopter rescue. As they worked, reports came in on his radio that fire jumped the line and was approximately 1,000 feet below their position. Three individuals from the helicopter required immediate medical assistance. Two individuals suffered broken backs and one individual broke their leg and sternum.

Fire Captain Anderson provided medical attention to the injured and emotional support to other firefighters in the area that had not witnessed such an incident. HFEO Westrip witnessed the crash, parked his vehicle, and made his way up the steep slope to the crash site. He administered first aid to the injured. As the fire continued to get closer to the helicopter and personnel, Battalion Chief Waterman, Fire Captain Anderson and HFEO Westrip coordinated and participated in the extraction, stabilized medical treatment and care to the three injured individuals trapped in the downed helicopter and assisted in the evacuation of some 50 rescuers. The fire below them gained intensity and eventually completely burned over the entire site where the helicopter had crashed.

Lloyd W. Watson

Captain

California Highway Patrol

11/1/1965

Special Act Award (Gold)

A car containing two men bypassed barricades on Cathedral Canyon Drive and was swept in to the Whitewater storm channel by rushing water. As the flood waters rose, the car overturned and the men, who had taken refuge on top of the car were thrown into the raging channel. Captain Lloyd W. Watson, who had just arrived at the scene, called for the men to swim to the north bank where he was standing. One of the men was swept downstream to his death and the other was tossed and tumbled toward Captain Watson. Placing his own life in jeopardy, Captain Watson entered the turbulent, debris-filled torrent and pulled the man to shore and safety

James R. Wattenburger

Fire Captain

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

5/17/1989

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 17, 1989, at approximately 9:00 a.m., Fire Captain James R. Wattenburger was off-duty and on his way to a ribbon-cutting ceremony when he came upon the scene of a fire at the New State Hotel in Ukiah, California. Upon seeing large volumes of fire billowing from the second story windows on the north end of the building and hearing screams from the people inside the hotel, Captain Wattenburger, without regard for his own safety or welfare and wearing only street clothes, entered the burning hotel to alert any remaining residents of the fire and assist with their rescue. He immediately spotted a group of terrified residents through the dense smoke at the top of the stairs. Since they were unable to find their way through the smoke, Captain Wattenburger climbed the stairs and escorted them to safety. He reentered the hotel on numerous occasions and carried or directed several confused and frightened residents through the fire and dense smoke to the nearest exits. On his last trip with the fire running the ceiling over the stairwell to the front door, Captain Wattenburger, carrying an elderly man over his shoulders, was hit by a 2 x 4 and other falling debris with such force that they were thrown against the exit door and into the street. Although two lives were lost in the fire, many more could have been lost if not for the decisive actions of Captain Wattenburger.

Paul Waymire

Los Angeles Police Department, Officer

Other

10/16/2005

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On October 16, 2005, Officers Jeffrey Jensen and Paul Waymire of the Los Angeles Police Department observed billows of black smoke coming from a car accident site in Los Angeles. Upon approach, they observed two good Samaritans attempting to extinguish a vehicle fire and extract the victim from the wreckage. Without fear for their own lives, they rushed to help the victim of the burning vehicle. With the fire intensifying and time becoming critical, the officers took charge, fought back the fire and removed the victim from the burning vehicle, which subsequently ignited and exploded in flames

Randall Weatherhead

Chief Warrant Officer Three

California Army National Guard

6/26/2008

Special Service Award (Silver)

At approximately 8 30 pm on June 26, 2008, Army National Guard personnel were preparing to conduct a short, Night Vision Goggle helicopter training mission in the Sacramento vicinity, when the call came in requesting support in a 10,000 foot rescue mission in the John Muir Wilderness. Earlier that day, a Boy Scout troop was crossing a stream in the remote Wilson Lake area of eastern Fresno County, when a 10 ton boulder rolled and trapped a fourteen-year-old boy's leg between it and another boulder Most of the crew assembled by Officer Weatherhead for the planned short training mission had already been on duty almost 12 hours. This mission would be challenging because the altitude for the rescue was at 10,000 feet which provided a reduced power capability, smoke from a nearby fire restricted visibility, the crew was starting the mission at a time they would normally be going home, and the darkness required use of Night Vision Goggles. In spite of all of this, the crew agreed to the mission and immediately began planning. The helicopter crew departed Mather at 10:10 pm and arrived at the Fresno airport at 11 20 pm where they picked up a CAL FIRE rescue employee and equipment. At 12 35 am, the crew departed Fresno under Night Vision Goggles. They located the victim, conducted a recon of the landing zone and landed at approximately 1:15 am While Officer Weatherhead stayed with the aircraft, the remainder of the crew, carrying the rescue equipment and using only head lamps and compasses, set out under total darkness through treacherously steep rocky terrain to find the Boy Scout After nearly three hours of rescue efforts, they were able to move the 10 ton boulder enough to free the boy's leg They administered medical aid and carried the boy for more than an hour back to the helicopter After being awake for 24 hours, the crew arrived at the Fresno airport at approximately 6 10 am and the Boy Scout was then transported to the hospital. The crew's actions, without regard for their personal safety, saved this young boy's life The State of California takes great pride in presenting Chief Warrant Officer Three Randall Weatherhead, Chief Warrant Officer Two Cole Gould, Sergeant First Class Kelly Hughes, and Staff Sergeant Rob Walters, these Silver Medals of Valor for their extraordinary acts of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service.

Brett Weber

State Park Peace Officer

Department of Parks and Recreation

5/4/2019

Special Service Award (Silver)

On May 4, 2019, shortly before midnight, Officer Brett Weber was on duty with Chris Hendricks and his K-9 partner, Janko, at Oceano Dunes State Vehicle Recreation Area. While they were on patrol, dispatch advised them of an active shooting in the beach camping area. Multiple shots had been fired from what appeared to be an automatic weapon. Numerous victims were down with gunshot wounds and dozens of others were attempting to flee to safety. Officers Hendricks and Weber immediately responded to the scene to assist the victims. When Officers Hendricks and Weber arrived on scene, they found pure chaos. Over 300 people were crying and running for safety, while others flagged down the officers to plead for assistance for friends who had been shot. Officers Hendricks and Weber deployed their weapons and attempted to locate the shooter. While they searched, someone flagged down the officers and directed them to a victim with gunshot wounds. They quickly assessed that the wounds were not life threatening and instructed bystanders to keep applying direct pressure. They continued their search for the shooter. The officers asked people if they knew where the shooter was and were directed toward a trailer. They entered the trailer, but the shooter was not inside. At this point, the officers realized that the active shooting had ceased and they transitioned from finding the shooter to treating the injured victims. One victim had at least two gunshot wounds, one to the upper chest and one to the back. While the officers were treating these wounds, a group of people ran to them screaming that there was another victim nearby with a serious gunshot wound to his upper leg. Realizing the seriousness of the second victim's wound location, Officer Hendricks ran to the second victim to begin assessing his wound. While this event was unfolding, the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Department deputies working in the Oceano area responded to the scene. An hours-long manhunt ensued through the night, with multiple state park peace officers and San Luis Obispo County Sheriff deputies searching the area. Through this collaborative effort, the sheriff's department was able to locate and arrest the suspect the following day. The courage and bravery Officer Weber displayed was nothing short of heroic. His courageous actions helped to rescue dozens of innocent people, prevent more from being shot and save the lives of two gunshot victims. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Weber went above and beyond the call of duty. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Silver Medal of Valor to Department of Parks and Recreation State Park Peace Officer Brett Weber

Kenneth Weckman

Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/6/2021

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 6, 2021, at 6:33 p.m. Officer Kenneth Weckman received a call notifying him of a vehicle blocking the roadway. Upon his arrival, he located an unoccupied van that was blocking the road with the door open and its engine running. Officer Weckman then heard screaming from a hundred yards away and drove over to the area where he found a woman waist deep in a water-filled canal attempting to smother a small child. Screaming that she was on drugs and that her son was possessed by the devil, she held her 4-year-old son face down in the muddy water. Officer Weckman tried to take the child away from the woman, but she wrapped her arms around her son and submerged herself and her son under the water. Officer Weckman entered the canal, wrested the child away from the woman and pulled him above the water. As Officer Weckman was swimming back to shore with the child, the woman grabbed ahold of Officer Weckman. The child was nonresponsive, and Officer Weckman was desperately trying to exit the canal to provide medical assistance to the child. Using his radio microphone, Officer Weckman put out an emergency radio traffic call advising of the situation. The woman then bit Officer Weckman on the right arm, grabbed his radio microphone and pulled on his firearm, attempting to remove it from the holster. At that time the child came to and told Officer Weckman, "Please don't kill my mommy." While holding the child in his left arm, the woman continued to fight Officer Weckman for four and a half minutes, attempting to pull both Officer Weckman and her son under water several times while verbally threatening to kill him. Yuba County Sheriff Sergeant Chad Watson arrived on scene, and Officer Weckman handed the child to Sergeant Watson who placed him on the embankment and then jumped into the canal to assist Officer Weckman. The woman continued to state that she was the devil, the child needed to die, and she was going to kill the officers. Yuba County Sheriff Deputy Justin Young then arrived and took the child to his patrol vehicle where he wrapped him in a jacket and turned the heater up. Deputy Young ran back and jumped in the canal to assist. Moments later, Officer Weckman, Sergeant Watson and Deputy Young were able to handcuff the woman, who later admitted to consuming illegal substances. A young child was saved due to their heroic acts. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Kenneth Weckman for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Brent Weese

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/3/2006

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 3, 2006, at 4:52 p.m. California Highway Patrol Officer Brent Weese was on patrol and working traffic enforcement in the Kern River Canyon area on State Route 178, when he was flagged down by a citizen who reported a vehicle over the side of the canyon. He responded to the location of the vehicle and was immediately met by flames surging toward the road. As he looked over the canyon, he observed two women running in a southwesterly direction away from the overturned vehicle, with a fast moving grass fire burning behind them. While making their escape, one of the females became entangled in heavy brush approximately forty feet down the canyon and was unable to free herself. Due to the intense flames between the trapped victim and himself, Officer Weese was unable to climb to her location to provide assistance. Thinking quickly, Officer Weese radioed to CHP communications and requested a nearby U.S. Forest Service fire truck respond to his location to extinguish the flames and help with a rescue. The fire truck arrived and Officer Weese directed the crew to spray a stream of suppressive water to give him a path to the victim.

With the water spraying over his head and the fire raging around him, Officer Weese made his way down the steep embankment to the woman ensnared in the brush. Exhausted and having difficulty breathing due to smoke inhalation, Officer Weese freed the entangled woman and assisted her up the canyon wall to a safe location at the road. Officer Weese's actions during this rescue were responsible for saving the life of another.

Jeremy M. Welch

Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/10/2022

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 10, 2022, at 2:11 a m , Officer Jeremy Welch and Officer Troy Wiltshire responded to mu tip e reports of a wrong-way driver traveling eastbound in the westbound lanes of Interstate 10. In an effort to a ert and redirect the wrong-way driver as well as slow the flow of traffic behind them, the officers initiated a traffic break, wherein Officer Wiltshire drove in a serpentine ike motion with emergency overhead lights on and siren activated. Headlights of the wrong-way vehic e approached them at a high rate of speed, not s owing down nor responding to the traffic break

Acute y aware of the wall of vehicles behind them and fearing for the safety of innocent civi ians, the officers made the sp it-second decision to protect others by p acing their own lives in harm's way. They deliberately maneuvered their patro vehic e direct y into the path of the wrong-way vehicle which was traveling over 90 mi es per hou The officers braced for the vio ent head-on crash and successfully stopped the wrong-way vehicle. While both vehicles sustained major damages, thankfu y Officer Welch and Officer Wiltshire survived. They were able to exit their patrol vehic e and assist the male wrong-way driver who suffered serious injuries. The driver and both officers were transported to a nearby hospital for treatment. The se fless and heroic actions of Officer Welch and Officer Wiltshire saved unknown numerous lives from severe injury and potential death. The State of Ca ifornia takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patro Officer Jeremy M Welch for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Robert Welch

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/19/1988

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 19, 1988, at approximately 8:30 p.m., Officer Robert E Welch and his partner received a radio ca describing a woman standing on the outside of an overcrossing above the northbound traffic lanes of the SR 41 freeway. Upon their arrival at the scene, it was apparent to the officers that the distraught woman intended to jump. Due to the urgency of the situation and while his partner engaged the woman in conversation, Officer Welch, without regard for his own personal safety, made his way around the barrier fence and onto a narrow edge along the outside edge of the overcrossing Despite the falling rain and traffic movement, Officer Welch made his way approximately 30 feet along the ledge to where the woman was standing and was able to pin her close to the fence by wrapping his right arm around her body and grasping the fence with his fingers He held the woman against the fence for approximately twenty minutes before the fire department was able to move a ladder into position and remove the woman and Officer Welch from the overcrossing The quick and unselfish actions of Officer Welch clearly prevented the distraught woman from ending her life

John Wells, III

Caltrans Highway Landscape Leadworker

Department of Transportation

1/21/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Transportation employee John Wells on January 21, 2004, performed an act of heroism at risk to his personnel safety by rescuing five children from a burning home in Sacramento. At 8:50 a.m., while driving to work on a foggy Sacramento morning, Mr. Wells noticed smoke coming through the fog from the roof of a house. Five children, ages 6, 7, 8, 9, and 13 were alone in the house when one of them went upstairs into an attic hideaway and began playing with a lighter and paper. A fire started and the child tried to put it out, but it quickly became out of control. Mr. Wells stopped and banged on the door, bringing one of the children to the window. He convinced the child to open the door. Once the door was opened, Mr. Wells found four of the children downstairs watching television unaware of the fire. He rushed all of the children including the one upstairs, safely out of the house and put them in the cab of his truck. He tried to call 911 on his cell phone, ran into technical difficulties and finally called the Caltrans dispatcher to notify firefighters, who were there within minutes. The fire was severe enough to cause the family to temporarily move out and the damage was estimated at $50,000. Sacramento Fire Department Captain Niko King stated that the house would have been gone in five minutes and Mr. Wells' instincts probably saved the lives of the children. Without a thought to his own personal safety, Mr. John Wells entered a burning home and rescued five children

Patricia 'Patti' K. West

Fire Apparatus Engineer/Paramedic

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

1/19/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 19, 2004 CDF Fire Apparatus Engineer Patti K. West performed an act of heroism risking her own personal safety during the Foothill Fire when she led seven firefighters to safety whose position was threatened by swiftly approaching wildfire. While performing a routine hose duty with part of her strike team, Engineer West noticed a sudden column of smoke and immediately contacted the safety lookout but was unable to give the exact location. Realizing that danger was looming, she quickly determined her crew was in immediate danger of being burned over by fire and made the immediate decision to evacuate their position ordering her crew to follow her into a safety zone up the opposite ridge in near 100-degree temperature. Minutes later an intense fire overran the entire area. As members became fatigues and attempted to sit down, she made them get up and encouraged them to continue to escape further in to the safety zone. Engineer West's crew remained cut off from their fire engines for over two hours before it was safe to exit the hillside. Although Engineer West's primary escape route was cut off and prevented an escape, she had a secondary escape route predetermined.

Fredrick Westrip

Heavy Fire Equipment Operator

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

1/26/2004

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Battalion Chief Joseph W. Waterman, Fire Captain Tena G. Anderson and Heavy Fire Equipment Operator (HFEO) Fredrick Westrip performed an act of heroism at risk to their own personal safety during the Straylor Fire in Butte County when they aided in the successful rescue and evacuation of three individuals from a downed Jet Ranger helicopter. On July 26, 2004, the helicopter was surveying the area to provide spot fire reports. The helicopter crashed in an area threatened by a rapidly growing spot fire. The fire continued to grow steadily as it neared the downed craft with occupants trapped inside. Upon reaching the downed helicopter, which had crashed in a steep terrain and brush area, Battalion Chief Waterman instructed and assisted additional firefighters on the scene to fall trees in the clearing to create a landing zone for a helicopter rescue. As they worked, reports came in on his radio that fire jumped the line and was approximately 1,000 feet below their position. Three individuals from the helicopter required immediate medical assistance. Two individuals suffered broken backs and one individual broke their leg and sternum.

Fire Captain Anderson provided medical attention to the injured and emotional support to other firefighters in the area that had not witnessed such an incident. HFEO Westrip witnessed the crash, parked his vehicle, and made his way up the steep slope to the crash site. He administered first aid to the injured. As the fire continued to get closer to the helicopter and personnel, Battalion Chief Waterman, Fire Captain Anderson and HFEO Westrip coordinated and participated in the extraction, stabilized medical treatment and care to the three injured individuals trapped in the downed helicopter and assisted in the evacuation of some 50 rescuers. The fire below them gained intensity and eventually completely burned over the entire site where the helicopter had crashed.

Christopher Wetzel

Fire Apparatus Engineer

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

10/1/2017

Special Act Award (Gold)

On October 1, 2017, at 10:08 pm., California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Apparatus Engineer Christopher Wetze was attending the Route 91 Harvest Festival in Las Vegas when gunfire rang out, striking concert goers across the venue. With more than 1,000 rounds fired, this incident was the deadliest mass shooting committed by an individual in the United States, killing over 50 people and injuring over 500. Once Engineer Wetzel realized the gravity of the situation, he took shelter under a table. Suddenly the gunfire ceased, allowing him to tend to an injured man suffering from an abdominal wound. Gunfire began again and despite the bullets whizzing by and shrapnel flying, Engineer Wetzel laid on top of the man to protect him. The bullets ceased again and other bystanders continued to assist the injured man while Engineer Wetzel got his wife to safety. Shortly after, the gunfire began again, and as he was making his way out of the venue, he noticed another injured man who appeared dazed and pale, stumbling around with blood pouring from his leg. Engineer Wetzel assisted him to safety then assessed his injuries and applied pressure to his wound. Eventually, an ambulance rushed the injured man to the hospital. With no regard for his own safety, Engineer Wetzel went above and beyond the call of duty, saving an innocent bystander's life. The State of California takes great pride in presenting this Gold Medal of Valor to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Apparatus Engineer Christopher Wetzel.

Steve Weyand

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/27/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 6 43 a m. on August 27, 2020, a private civi ian airp ane was departing from Benton Airpark and crashed just after take-off Sergeant Jeff Edgerton noticed from his office window a private airplane was attempting to takeoff at an unusual a titude that was immediatey apparent to him was not consistent with sustained flight. Sergeant Edgerton announced to everyone in the office that a plane was about to crash. The airp ane departed the runway complex and crashed into a steep, brush-filled ravine Officer Steve Weyand ran from the Air Ops office towards the runway. Lieutenant Michael Berry, Officer Erik Mallory, Officer Jeffery Hatcher, and Officer Eric Pohrman arrived within approximately 30 seconds of the crash and found the first victim on the ground within 10 feet of the burning fuselage. While circling the aircraft, they came upon a second victim who had been thrown 20 feet from the aircraft and was actively on fire. Officer Pohrman uti ized a patro vehic e fire extinguisher to put out the fire on and around the second victim Officer Hatcher Lieutenant Berry, and Officer Mallory picked up the second victim and moved him away from the fire Officer Weyand ran from the Air Ops office to the airport perimeter and c imbed the perimeter fence to retrieve the fire extinguisher from a patrol vehic.e

Officer Weyand fought the fire and quickly depleted the fire extinguisher He ran back up the steep embankment and obtained two more fire extinguishers from arriving ambu ances and proceeded back down the ravine to fight the fire.

Officer Weyand then ran back up the ravine and obtained additiona fire extinguishers from civi ians who had stopped to help. Officer Weyand went back towards the fu y engulfed wreckage to assist the first victim. Officer Weyand and Officer Pohrman battled the fire on and around the victim, who crawled 5 more feet from the crash Sergeant Edgerton, Officer Pohrman, and Officer Hatcher were ab e to pu the victim further away from the burning aircraft. In all, Officer Weyand dep eted six fire extinguishers to keep the fire away from the victims and CHP personne With no regard for his own safety, Officer Weyand went above and beyond the call of duty The State of Ca ifornia takes great pride in presenting this Gold Meda of Valor to California Highway Patro Officer Steve Weyand.

Joshpae B. White

Fire Apparatus Engineer

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/4/2011

Special Service Award (Silver)

On June 4, 2011, at approximately 4:00 p.m., Fire Apparatus Engineer Joshpae B. White, along with two other firefighters, responded to a call involving a vehicle crash in a notoriously rugged stretch of the Feather River on Highway 70 in Butte County. Upon reaching the area, one of the firefighters spotted a small body floating face down in the swift moving river. Engineer White decided that as company officer, he would enter the frigid water instead of waiting for a second engine to arrive. He quickly donned swift water protective equipment and a fellow firefighter positioned himself with a throw bag rope along the downstream bank. Engineer White, fighting the rapids, reached the child, lifted his head out of the water, secured him in his grasp, and then swam to shore with him. The firefighter aided Engineer White with the rope and once they reached shore, they began CPR and mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Despite the decisive action of Engineer White, the 9-year-old boy could not be revived.

Dale William White, Jr

Caltrans Equipment Operator II

Department of Transportation

12/18/2008

Special Act Award (Gold)

On December 18, 2008, Interstate 5 near the Grapevine was closed due to snow and ice conditions. At approximately 9:15 a.m., Caltrans employees Dale William White Jr. and Brandon Warner, and CHP Officer Joanna McKinty were talking inside the Operation Snowflake Grapevine closure, when they suddenly saw a car heading toward the closure at a high rate of speed. It was evident to all present that the car wasn't going to stop. Because of its high rate of speed, it was also impossible to predict what direction the car was headed. After hitting a couple of signs and road cones, the car fish tailed and, now out of control, was headed directly toward Mr. White, Mr. Warner and Officer McKinty. For a few terrifying seconds, all three were frozen in place, including nearby witnesses who watched the potential catastrophe unfolding before their eyes. Mr. White yelled, "He's not stopping, get out of the way!" and pushed Mr. Warner and Officer McKinty out of harm's way while barely escaping being hit by the car. Mr. Warner and Officer McKinty hit the ground just out of the path of the speeding car, which then hit a sign and sped off at a high rate of speed. The car was later stopped by the CHP and the driver was charged with driving under the influence of alcohol and reckless driving. Although Mr. Warner sustained a knee injury in the fall, he and Officer McKinty went home to their families that evening. Mr. Warner said of his co-worker, "If Dale wouldn't have pushed us, we would have been hit, as the car was coming straight at us." This feeling is shared by all who witnessed the incident. The actions of Mr. White, without regard for his own safety, prevented major injuries or death to Mr. Warner and Officer McKinty.

Corben G. Whitney

Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/13/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 13, 2007 at 6:00 p.m., California Highway Patrol Officer Corben Whitney was off-duty and traveling eastbound on State Route 152 east of Dunne Lane in his car when he saw a gray Volkswagen van approaching from the opposite direction. The van collided with a concrete wall and was pinned between the wall and the mountainside. The van immediately erupted into flames. Officer Whitney stopped and helped the driver and his eight year old nephew out and away from the burning van. Officer Whitney asked the driver if anyone else was in the vehicle. Then he heard the sound of a young child screaming from within the now fully engulfed van. Officer Whitney returned, looked inside the open sliding passenger side door of the van through the smoke and flames, and saw a four year old seated in the rear seat of the van, buckled in a car seat, and covered in flames from the waist up. The boy was screaming and covering his face with his hands. Officer Whitney reached inside the burning van and grabbed the boy's shirt which tore from his body and burst into flames.

Then he grabbed the boy's right leg and tried to pull him out of the van. The child's seatbelt prevented the rescue and the fire swelled down to the floor board forcing Officer Whitney to let go of the child and back away from the flames. Officer Whitney reached into the van a final time and grabbed the boy's leg with both hands and pulled with all his strength. The seatbelt gave way and the child was pulled free from the burning van. Officer Whitney extinguished the flames from the boy's body, rendered first aid, and took the victims through blocked traffic to an area where emergency medical personnel could provide aid. As a result of Officer Whitney's efforts the child survived.

John Whitt

Caltrans Lead Structural Steel Painter

Department of Transportation

11/7/1991

Special Act Award (Gold)

Caltrans Lead Structural Steel Painter John Whitt, on November 7, 1991, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his personal safety in the rescue of a distraught man, threatening suicide, from a 14-inch lateral beam on the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. Shortly after Mr. Whitt left Caltrans West Bay Paint Yard, located directly under the west end of the Bay Bridge, a driver in a tow truck hailed him and advised that a man climbed over the side of the bridge. Mr. Whitt, disregarding his own safety and life, responded immediately by going over the side where he found the distraught elderly man standing on a 14-inch lateral of the floor system. Although Mr. Whitt had safety gear with him, there was no place to hook a lanyard in this particular area; if he lost his footing he would have plunged to his death. Mr. Whitt, often without a hand-hold of any kind, proceeded to talk to the elderly man who was attempting to balance himself on a beam. By this time, San Francisco Fire Department and Police Department arrived on the scene to negotiate with the would-be suicide victim. The man became agitated as others attempted to talk to him, responding positively only to Mr. Whitt's voice. As Mr. Whitt continued to talk to the man, two other workers from the paint yard rigged up a safety line and finally secured Mr. Whitt. Tired, cold and emotionally drained, Mr. Whitt continued to talk to the elderly man for approximately two hours before the man's sister arrived and coaxed him to stretch his hand out to Mr. Whitt. As they made contact, Mr. Whitt immediately took the victim in a bear hug, held him until a harness could be lowered, placed it around him, and brought him safely up over the bridge rail.

Chris Williams

Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/7/2022

Special Service Award (Silver)

On May 7, 2022, at approximately 11 00 a m , Sergeant Wi iam Fitzgerald arrived on the scene of a reported possible male jumper who was parked on the right shou der of southbound Interstate 5 to the westbound State Route 91 transition road. Sergeant Fitzgera d noticed a man sitting in the passenger seat of the vehic e ta king on his cell phone and asked if he needed assistance. The man advised his vehicle had broken down, but he was OK. Officers Christopher Wi iams and Kasey Simas then arrived on their departmenta motorcycles. Sergeant Fitzgerald walked over to advise them of the situation. Meanwhile, the man exited his vehicle and stood next to the three-foot concrete barrier wall along the right shoulder, still ta king on his ce phone and looking over the side. Officer Wi iams and Officer Simas asked him to step away from the wall, as it wasn't safe. While the officers were speaking with the man, he suddenly climbed atop the concrete barrier and attempted to take his own life by jumping off the 100-foot transition road to the freeway be ow Risking their safety, the two officers and sergeant were able to grab the man, whose body was hanging over the concrete barrier. The man began to shou t, "P ease et me go! Please let me go!" Sergeant Fitzgerald and Officers Wi iams and Simas su cessfu y rescued the man by pulling him back over the concrete barrier and onto the right shoulder of the transition road, preventing his imminent death Sergeant Fitzgerald transported the man to a safe location off the freeway where emergency medical personnel assessed and transported him to the hospita The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Silver Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Christopher F Williams for his act of heroism extending above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Keith R. Williams

State Park Ranger

Department of Parks and Recreation

6/15/1976

Special Act Award (Gold)

On June 15, 1976, during the early morning hours, Rangers Lee R. Clark, Daniel E. Scott and Keith R. Williams were preparing to dive for abalone along the rocky cliffs of the Mendocino shoreline when they heard calls for help coming from about a quarter of a mile out at sea. Three survivors of a capsized boat were clinging desperately to the overturned craft and a nearby rock as the cold waves tossed them around, draining their fast ebbing strength. Quickly getting into their wet suits, the three men dispatched Ranger Williams's brother to get help and then they started the long arduous swim. The rangers, though not trained as lifeguards and very much aware of the hazards of the rough, cold water and rocks, swam out to rescue the men. One had a severe heart condition. With concentrated effort, the three rangers systematically brought the victims to shore, using their wet suits to supply a degree of warmth to the chilled victims. On shore, the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office was waiting with ambulances to transport the victims to the hospital.

Nathaniel A. Williams

Offices Services Supervisor I

Department of Motor Vehicles

2/8/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On February 8, 2007 at approximately 6:15 p.m. California Department of Motor Vehicles' employee Nathaniel (Nate) Williams was driving east of Interstate 5, down March Lane in Stockton. Suddenly, a vehicle, driven by a 30-year old man, jumped a median and hit a minivan and a pick-up truck. Mr. Williams, whose vehicle was nearly hit by the out-of-control sedan, abandoned his vehicle and sprinted across traffic to assist. Despite the 9 foot high flames coming out of the front of the victim's vehicle, Mr Williams and an unidentified woman, who had a small fire extinguisher, pulled the unconscious victim out of the burning vehicle. The Stockton Fire Department Battalion Chief called Mr. Williams a hero and the victim was transported to a local hospital by ambulance.

Stephen Williams

Automotive Technician

California Highway Patrol

5/4/1993

Special Act Award (Gold)

On May 4, 1993, at 4:45 pm, CHP Automotive Technician Steve Williams was off duty and had finished surfing at Manresa State Beach. He was walking up the cliff stairs when he heard a woman frantically yelling for help. The woman was gesturing toward a lone swimmer who was caught in the rip tide and was rapidly being carried away from shore. There were no other swimmers or surfers in the area. Without hesitation, Steve entered the white water and paddled his surfboard 75 to 80 yards toward the drowning man. Due to the adverse conditions, including five to seven foot waves, Steve was not able to see the drowning man while attempting to swim to his location. He had to be guided to the victim by a man on the beach,. After negotiating the approximate two knot current with two to three knot rips for roughly twenty minutes, Steve successfully reached the victim. He secured the exhausted swimmer to his surfboard, rested and brought him safely to shore. The entire rescue lasted over thirty minutes. Even once on land, the victim was not able to walk for some time. Steve had to drag him up the beach to recover

Tyler Lukrich Williams

Fire Apparatus Operator

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

10/12/2022

Special Act Award (Gold)

In the early hours of the morning of October 12, 2020, Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Apparatus Engineer Tyler Williams, Fire Apparatus Engineer Omar Desiderio, and others were dispatched to a two-story building engulfed in flames in the mountain community of Pine Cove. Upon arrival, fire department personnel encountered flames throughout the first story, overcoming the second story, and burning through the roof. One victim was on the roof frantically calling for help with a second victim unconscious and trapped inside a second story bedroom. An immediate rescue of the trapped residents was needed. Unable to make access from the first floor, Engineer Williams and Engineer Desiderio leaped into action without direction and placed a ladder to the second story to gain access They broke open the bedroom window and dove headfirst into the burning room without hose lines. Implementing a left-hand search, they located the unconscious victim under heavy fire and smoke conditions. Engineer Williams and Engineer Desiderio dragged the victim through the bedroom window with heavy fire rolling over them. The victim was flown by air ambulance to a burn center with severe injuries, but after treatment for 3rd degree burns, she survived and fully recovered. With no regard for his own safety, Fire Apparatus Engineer Williams went above and beyond the call of duty The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Apparatus Engineer Tyler Williams.

Warren M. Williams

Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor

Department of Transportation

8/20/1991

Special Act Award (Gold)

Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor Warren M. Williams, on August 20, 1991, performed an extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his personal safety and life in the rescue of a paraplegic trapped inside a burning van. While working at the corporation yard on Palm Avenue near Valley Bible Church in Hercules, California, Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor Warren Williams heard the persistent honking of a vehicle. Looking up a steep slope, he saw a van with smoke rising from beneath it, struck in the weeds. Williams yelled at the driver, "Are you okay?" The driver replied that his vehicle was on fire and that he was paralyzed. A fence and deep ravine separated Williams from the vehicle and its occupant. Williams ran approximately one-half mile through the corporation yard, down the street, and to the van. Although exhausted, Williams managed to pull the paralyzed man from his specially equipped van to safety before it became fully engulfed in flames.

Steve B. Wills

Officer

California Highway Patrol

9/5/1998

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 5, 1998, at approximately 9:30 a.m., California Highway Patrol Officer Steve B. Wills and United States Border Patrol Agent Timothy Gorman were returning from a traffic collision involving Agent Gorman. A 1993 Nissan truck was westbound on State Route 98 (SR 98) ahead of the patrol car. At the same time, a 1995 Ford Taurus was eastbound on SR 98 approaching the truck's location. The driver of the truck attempted to turn left onto a dirt road and had failed to yield the right-of-way to the Taurus. The front of the truck was struck by the Taurus. A five-year old boy who was in the truck got pinned on his back with the roofline of the truck across his chest. Hot fluids from the engine compartment were running down and onto the boy's arm. The weight of the truck was compressing the boy's chest and preventing him from breathing. Officer Wills squatted down and grabbed the portion of roof on the ground near the boy. He then stood up and lifted the entire truck approximately 18 inches off the ground. The boy's legs were entangled in a seat belt under the truck. It took approximately two to three minutes for Agent Gorman to untangle the boy from the truck. During this time, Officer Wills, without assistance, was able to hold the truck off of the child. Officer Wills then continued lifting the truck, and returned it to an upright position on its wheels. The driver and the other passenger were able to free themselves. Officer Wills retrieved an Emergency Medical Technician kit from the patrol car, and he and Agent Gorman attended to the child. Officer Wills and Agent Gorman saw there was blood in the child's mouth and that he was not breathing. They loosened the boy's shirt and trousers and cleared the blood from his mouth. Moments later, the boy began to breathe and cry. Ultimately, the child was transported by ambulance to El Centro Regional Medical Center and was then flown to Children's Hospital in San Diego where his condition rapidly improved.

Matt Wilson

Ocean Beach Lifeguard and EMT

Other

1/18/2004

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On January 18, 2004, Emergency Medical Technician Matt Wilson of the City of Imperial Beach Public Safety Department responded to a cry for help from a boy who witnessed his three teenage friends jump into the turbulent and icy waters of Imperial Beach. After calling for backup, Matt Wilson proceeded to jump into the ocean three separate times, rescuing each of the victims from being crushed into the Municipal Pier by the deadly eight foot waves

William Wilson

Maintenance Man

Department of Transportation

12/23/1964

Special Service Award (Silver)

District 1 Maintenance Man William F. Wilson, Jr. saved the George M. Leatherwood Memorial Bridge over the Eel River from almost certain destruction by dynamiting a log jam that was pounding against it during a heavy winter storm. Mr. Wilson unhesitatingly volunteered his services when dynamiting the jam appeared to be the best solution. Although high winds, swirling water, and pounding rain made his footing precarious, Mr. Wilson stepped onto slippery, shifting logs carrying a case of dynamite. His only protection was a rope around his waist. Correctly judging the main log in the jam, he placed the charge and then made his way back over the slippery logs and the raging river until he was pulled to safety by his co-workers. The dynamite was detonated and the log jam dispersed and floated downstream, relieving the bridge of the immediate danger.

Troy David Wiltshire

Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/10/2022

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 10, 2022, at 2:11 a m , Officer Troy Wiltshire and Officer Jeremy Welch responded to multiple reports of a wrong-way driver traveling eastbound in the westbound lanes of Interstate 10. In an effort to alert and redirect the wrong-way driver as well as slow the flow of traffic behind them, the officers initiated a traffic break, wherein Officer Wiltshire drove in a serpentine like motion with emergency overhead lights on and siren activated. Headlights of the wrong-way vehicle approached them at a high rate of speed, not slowing down nor responding to the traffic break Acutely aware of the wall of vehicles behind them and fearing for the safety of innocent civilians, the officers made the split-second decision to protect others by placing their own lives in harm's way. They deliberately maneuvered their patrol vehicle directly into the path of the wrong-way vehicle which was traveling over 90 miles per hour The officers braced for the violent head-on crash and successfully stopped the wrong-way vehicle. While both vehicles sustained major damages, thankfully Officer Wiltshire and Officer Welch survived. They were able to exit their patrol vehicle and assist the male wrong-way driver who suffered serious injuries. The driver and both officers were transported to a nearby hospital for treatment. The selfless and heroic actions of Officer Wiltshire and Officer Welch saved unknown numerous lives from severe injury and potential death The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol Officer Troy David Wiltshire for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Matthew W. Winter

Officer

California Highway Patrol

1/10/2005

Special Act Award (Gold)

California Highway Patrol Officer Matthew W Winter on January 10, 2005 performed an act of heroism at risk to his personal safety in the rescue attempts of numerous individuals trapped by a major landslide in the community of La Conchita. Officer Matthew W Winter was at the intersection of US 101 and Santa Barbara Avenue when he heard and saw a large landslide behind the community of La Conchita. The landslide appeared to envelop a small group of pedestrians who had been on Santa Barbara Avenue. The landslide also engulfed and destroyed approximately 15 homes, stopping approximately 100 yards from Officer Winter. Officer Winter, ignoring the danger, ran toward the landslide and encountered a confused male with a minor head laceration. Officer Winter instructed the unidentified male on how to slow the flow of blood and had him sit on the curb. Officer Winter continued toward the slide and encountered three more civilians one with a fractured leg. Officer Winter directed them toward an area that was accessible and visible to responding ambulances. Officer Winter was aware of an extreme hazard in the area when he smelled natural gas and could hear the high pitch hissing of gas escaping. Officer Winter crossed the unstable debris pile in an attempt to locate the gas leak. Officer Winter located the gas leak, however, the pipe was broken below ground level. Officer Winter persisted and eventually, with the assistance of a Ventura County Sheriff's Deputy and an unidentified civilian, was able to stop the flow of natural gas by plugging the pipe with a wooden stick Officer Winter then entered a damaged and unstable home on Santa Barbra Avenue and began assisting a civilian who thought he could hear a woman screaming. Officer Winter worked by removing several layers of debris and eventually could see the arm of the woman who had been screaming for help. After being certain that a live victim that been found, Officer Winter worked with two other rescuers in gaining access to the victim. Officer Winter crawled through the rubble and debris, procured a door to be used as a makeshift backboard, and eventually removed the victim from the wreckage. Officer Winter remained on scene assisting victims until the arrival of trained rescue personnel allowed Officer Winter to be replaced.

Jonathan Wion

Officer

California Highway Patrol

8/27/2020

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 6:34 a.m. on August 27, 2020, a private civilian airplane departing from Benton Airpark in Redding crashed just after takeoff. Benton Airpark is the base of operation for the California Highway Patrol Northern Division Air Operations Unit. Multiple CHP personnel were inside the Air Operations office, when it was noticed that the private airplane was attempting to take off at an unusual altitude, inconsistent with sustained flight. The airplane departed the runway complex, crossed over Placer Street and crashed into a steep, brush-filled ravine. CHP personnel heard and observed a large explosion caused by the downed aircraft. Officer Jonathan Wion ran from the Air Operations office towards the scene, and initially began to clear pedestrians and vehicular traffic to make way for emergency medical response personnel. Officer Chad Smith, who was off duty and on his way to the Air Operations office, approached the scene, put on his department rapid deployment vest to identify himself as a peace officer and proceeded to assist. CHP personnel were first to arrive on scene and carefully trekked down the steep embankment to the crash site, which was fully engulfed in flames. There they saw the first injured victim on the ground, nearly 10 feet away from the burning fuselage. Due to the extreme heat from the burning wreckage, fuel and vegetation, CHP personnel were forced to retreat on their first attempt at a rescue. They decided to circle around the fuselage to approach the injured victim from a different angle. While circling the aircraft, they came upon a second victim who had been thrown approximately 20 feet from the burning aircraft and was actively on fire along with the surrounding vegetation. CHP personnel were able to extinguish the fire enough to move the second victim away from the fully engulfed fuselage. Officer Wion then worked with Officer Smith to again move the second victim to a safer location, away from the flames. They began to remove the still-smoldering clothes that were clinging to the injured victim's body, then covered the victim with a blanket and provided airway support. At about this time, the aircraft's onboard oxygen tank had caught fire and caused a large secondary explosion, just 15 feet away from CHP personnel. Despite the intense heat, CHP personnel were able to use fire extinguishers to battle the fire on and around the first victim and pull him away from the burning aircraft and vegetation. Once the Redding Fire Department assumed fire protection, Officers Wion and Smith assisted in moving the injured parties up the steep embankment to waiting ambulances. The victims were transported to a nearby medical center for treatment of several life-threatening injuries. The State of California takes great pride in presenting the Gold Medal of Valor to California Highway Patrol, Officer Jonathan Wion for his extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty.

Thomas Wise

Motorcycle Offier

California Highway Patrol

8/30/1977

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 30, 1977, Motorcycle Officer Thomas Wise was on the Hollywood freeway when he spotted a stalled car in a traffic lane. He called dispatch for a patrol car to push the staff off the road when he heard squealing tires and a loud crash. A huge ball of fire erupted 50 feet in the air. Officer Wise quickly crossed over the freeway, entered the traffic lanes on an off-ramp and saw a burning camper. The camper had rammed into the stalled car and crushed its fuel tank which had exploded. A voice shouted "There's a kid in the camper!" Officer Wise and a fireman ran to the camper's back door but the flames forced the fireman back. Officer Wise, however, tugged at the door. Finding it locked, he punched a hole in the window with his gloved fist and wrenched the door free. He couldn't see anyone and his boots were now on fire. He back away and again a voice said "There's a boy in the camper!" At that same moment, the camper's gas tank split, gushing fuel onto the ground. Flames were leaping on all sides of the vehicle, but Officer Wise ran to the right front door, found it also jammed, and smashed the window out with his fist. The unconscious boy lay on the floor. Officer Wise forced his head and arm in far enough to grasp the boy and tug him out the window. Officer Wise then ran through a wall of fire, cradling the 12 year old youth from the flames. Upon reaching safety, his boots were again aflame, his clothes were smoldering and his fist and arm were cut by glass. Officer Wise later learned that the voice that had been calling for help was the boy's uncle who had been driving the camper.

John Wold

State Traffic Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/16/1982

Special Act Award (Gold)

On March 16, 1982, at approximately 10:45 am, Officer John Wold was dispatched to a possible suicide attempt on the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge Upon arrival, Officer Wold observed an adult ma e c inging to a steel ladder on the superstructure, approximate y 75 feet above the roadway and 300 feet above the bay The subject appeared depressed and distraught and stated that he was going to jump. When the subject refused to climb down, Officer Wold obtained a nylon-webbed safety harness from bridge authority personnel and proceeded to climb toward the subject. Stopping within a few feet from the subject, Officer Wold spent approximately twenty minutes attempting to talk the subject out of taking his life. The subject ultimately conceded to abandon his suicide attempt. Officer secured his right wrist in a handcuff while ho ding on to the other end of the cuff to deter him from changing his mind. During the descent, Officer Wold was forced to disconnect the safety belt several times in order to maneuver the clasps past the rungs of the adder. If at any time the suspect had decide to jump or either man s ipped, Officer Wold would most certainly not survived the fall into the San Francisco Bay

Terry Wondzell

Officer

California Highway Patrol

12/9/1989

Special Act Award (Gold)

Officer Terry Wondzell was at the scene of a disabled 18 whee tractor trailer when he watched an approaching truck skid off the pavement, strike another vehic e, hit an embankment and land upside down Gaso ine spilled out of the overturned truck and Officer Wondzell noticed that the driver had crawled out of the driver's window with a child in her arms Officer Wondzell retrieved an infant just as the gaso ine ignited. The driver indicated that two more victims were sti inside Unable to reach the victims through the side windows because of the flames, Officer Wondzell entered the truck through the windshield He was able to pu a woman and an infant to safety moments before flames engulfed the truck

John J. Wood Jr.

Officer

California Highway Patrol

3/27/1960

Special Act Award (Gold)

On the morning of March 27, 1960, Officer Wood, while en route to his residence after completed his motorcycle duty shift, observed flames and smoke arising from a house trailer in a trailer court in Bellflower. The officer immediately radioed his office requesting the fire department be notified. He then ran to the house trailer and attempted to open the door, but it was locked. Finally succeeding in forcing the door open, he was immediately enveloped by intense heat and dense smoke. By lying on the floor he observed what appeared to be a body. Without regard to his own personal safety, Officer Wood managed to reach the hand of an unconscious 36 year old woman whom he dragged from the blazing trailer. The officer fell outside the trailer with the victim as he was nearly overcome with smoke. The woman was barely breathing so he immediately applied artificial respiration until her breathing became normal although she remained unconscious. A resident of the adjoining trailer was awakened by the noise and attempted to extinguish the flames with a garden hose. He informed Officer Wood that two women shared the trailer and the second woman might still be inside. Officer Wood, noticeably suffering from the effects of the heavy smoke, heat, and gasses, attempted to re-enter the trailer with the neighbor. In spite of the flames, they were able to penetrate far enough inside to become convinced that no one else was inside the trailer. The fire department arrived and extinguished the fire. Rescue personnel administered oxygen to the unconscious victim and then transported her to the hospital. Although the victim suffered first, second, and third degree burns on her upper body and arms, had it not been for Officer Wood, her life would have undoubtedly been lost.

Scott W. Woodring

California Highway Patrol Officer

California Highway Patrol

7/1/2007

Special Act Award (Gold)

On July 1, 2007, California Highway Patrol Officer Scott W. Woodring and Officer Adam Yates arrived at the scene of a major injury collision involving a car that ran off US-101, struck a tree, and became entangled in the freeway perimeter fencing. The car was on fire, and the fire was rapidly approaching the passenger compartment. The driver was critically injured and pinned in the wreckage. Officer Yates began using his fire extinguisher on the intensifying fire as it entered the passenger compartment, while Officer Woodring quickly began cutting the driver's seat belt straps. Officer Yates then handed the fire extinguisher to Officer Woodring to continue spraying the fire while he attempted to pull the driver from the vehicle. When Officer Yates realized the driver's legs were entangled in the dash assembly of the vehicle, he enlisted the assistance of a witness to the accident. Working together, the three men were able to pull the trapped man from the wreckage in the nick of time just as the passenger compartment became fully engulfed in flames. As a result of their heroic rescue efforts both Officer Woodring and Officer Yates received injuries from the fire and smoke. The actions of Officers Woodring and Yates, without regard for their own safety, prevented further injuries or death to the trapped driver.

Donald Woods

Fire Captain (Patrolman)

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

8/2/1970

Special Act Award (Gold)

On August 2, 1970, Fire Captain (Patrolman) Donald Woods performed and extraordinary act of heroism at great risk to his own safety and life to save the life of a woman trapped by flames of a brush fire. Fire Captain (Patrolman) Donald Woods was investigating the cause and origin of a 2000 acre brushfire near the Olive Dell Nudist Camp between Riche and San Timoteo canyons in Riverside County, California. Fire Fighting Aircraft spotted a female Nudist, 50 year old running toward the fire. She apparently had become confused after rescuing some clothing from her trailer at the nudist camp and ran towards the fire. Patrolman Woods drove his pick-up through the flames to rescue the woman who was encircled by fire. When he reached the woman she was exhausted and could not help herself, Patrolman Woods had to drag the nude woman off the hillside and, keeping her trailer between her and himself, he dragged the woman around the outside of the trailer until the fire front passed.

Raymond Woods

Officer

Department of Justice

11/1/2013

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor

On November 1, 2013, a lone gunman walked into Terminal 3 of the Los Angeles International airport and opened fire with a semi-automatic assault rifle, killing one TSA officer and wounding seven civilians. The initial call to Airport Police dispatch was received within 60 seconds of the shooting. Los Angeles Airport Police Sergeant Steve Zouzounis acknowledged the call and was on scene just 30 seconds later, and joined immediately by five Airport Police officers responding to the shooting: David Lalicker, Brian Lopez, Robert Pedregon, Raymond Woods and Daniel Yu.

Trying to determine possible accomplices among the hundreds of passengers, the six officers assumed a diamond shaped "active shooter formation" and advanced on the gunman. Determining the assailant was acting alone, the officers split into two groups of three and entered from opposite ends of the concourse the shooter was located. The officers confronted him and exchanged gun fire. Due to the six officer's quick and decisive actions, the shooter was neutralized and taken into custody within four minutes after the initial "shots fired" radio call. Paramedics transported the perpetrator to a local hospital where he was treated for his injuries. The actions of these officers prevented the shooter from further injuring or fatally wounding hundreds of airport personnel and travelers.

Scott Worley

Officer

California Highway Patrol

5/22/1997

Special Act Award (Gold)

At 10:00 a.m., Officers Tony S. Nunes and Scott Worley were on patrol when they observed smoke in the roadway at 18 Street north of K Street. The officers located the source of the smoke as the rear wall of a building on 18th street. Officers Nunes and Worley approached the building and saw flames coming from the rear of the residence. The officer requested Sacramento City Fire and began awakening the residents. All but two residents emerged from the building, so Officer Nunes and Worley approached the southern upper apartment and banged on the door. The apartment was filled with smoke and after banging loudly on the door, the officers were about to kick it in when the resident answered.

He had been sleeping soundly. The officers entered the apartment and confirmed the residency was not further occupied. The officer spoke with the people on the sidewalk and were told that one resident was still unaccounted for and they were not sure if she was home or not. Officer Nunes and Worley again went up to the second floor of the burning building and repeatedly banged on the missing resident's apartment door, but there was no answer. With smoke increasing and no confirmed ETA from the fire department, Officer Worley kicked in the two, the two officers entered and confirmed the apartment was unoccupied. The officers gathered all the residents in from of the building and everyone was accounted for.

Jim Wright

Division Chief

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/12/2015

Special Act Award (Gold)

On September 12, 2015, at approximately 2:00 p.m., California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Division Chief Jim Wright was off duty and at home when he was notified about the Valley Fire. He was assigned to be the Evacuation Group Supervisor and quickly went to work even though his personal home was immediately threatened.

Chief Wright drove into the path of the fire and started evacuating local residents when he heard a mayday call from the Boggs Mountain Helitack crew's captain over the radio. During the initial attack on the Valley Fire, four of the eight member Helitack Base CAL FIRE Copter 104 became entrapped by a significant fire storm and had to use their emergency fire shelters to protect themselves. All four received second and third degree burns to their face, neck, back, legs, arms, and hands. Based on the captain's description of their location, Chief Wright believed he knew where they were. He drove to the base of an access road and found four uninjured members of the eight member group. They quickly jumped in the truck with Chief Wright as he drove towards the four firefighters who were in danger.

Driving through fire and thick smoke, Chief Wright navigated up the road using burned trees as markers until he saw a clearing in the smoke and was able to distinguish the silver fire shelters in the distance. Chief Wright pulled up and the crew that arrived with him quickly loaded the burned firefighters into the back of his pickup. Chief Wright then drove them to a landing zone where the badly burned captain and firefighters were transferred to a CALFIRE helicopter and ultimately flown to the UC Davis Burn Center for treatment.

William A. Clark

Fire Crew Supervisor

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2/2/1977

Special Act Award (Gold)

On February 2, 1977, Fire Crew Supervisor William A. Clark, while supervising a cleaning crew at Oceano Beach, observed a boat in the rough sea about 600 feet off shore. The five occupants were waving distress flags. Fire Crew Supervision Clark immediately radioed for help from the Coast Guard and the sheriff's department. He then returned to the beach and accompanied by inmate crewmember John London, he entered the rough surf and fought his way to the boat, which by now had been swept into the breaker, overturned, and totally splintered by the powerful waves. Fire Crew Supervisor Clark and inmate London managed to bring all five occupants to the shore. It was necessary to give artificial respiration to one before the ambulance arrived. Of the five occupants, only one, a Bakersfield man in his 70's died.